The Shadow From Beyond Time
Chapter 3
At the Farm of Madness

The Shadow From Beyond Time
Chapter 1
Horror on Houston Street

NEW YORK CITY, NY
APRIL 3, 1926

IT'S A BEAUTIFUL NIGHT IN THE MOST AMAZING CITY IN THE WORLD.

THERE'S AN ELECTRICITY IN THE AIR ON NIGHTS LIKE THIS.

AND HERE I AM.

VITAPHONICS

TESLA HEAVY INDUSTRIES

LAFAYETTE ST

HOUSTON ST

STUDYING.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

SCRAM.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

BUDDY, WE'RE CLOSED! COME BACK TOMORROW!

OR NEVER.

THANK YOU.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

WUH-THUD

I'MA COMMIT MURDERS.

HURRY, CHARLES!

HURRY! WE ARE AMONG MONGRELS HERE. CAN'T YOU SMELL THEM CLOSING IN?

I CAN'T KNOCK ANY HARDER WITHOUT SHATTERING THE BONE.

GREAT. DRUNKS.

GET OU--

AUGH!

I SAY!

OUR MAN TESLA'S HIRED HIMSELF A THROWBACK MAN-SERVANT. A PYGMY!

OH, HOWARD. REALLY.

THE MOON IS FULL, WE MUST HAVE INTERRUPTED ITS BLACK RITUAL.

BUT HE'S WEARING SLACKS. NO, THAT'S THE, THE WHATSIT. GOT AT LEAST TWO-DOZEN NOTES ON THIS LAD.

THE ARMOR IS CLEARLY CEREMONIAL. NO DOUBT MEANT TO REPRESENT ONE OF THE THRONG OF ITS PRIMORDIAL FACELESS GODS.

'SCUSE ME.

AH! LOOK, IT'S ATTEMPTING TO COMMUNICATE. NO DOUBT THE SAVAGE THING KNOWS LANGUAGE AS A HOUSE PET KNOWS ITS REFLECTION IN THE MIRROR. THE SENSE IS TAKEN IN, BUT THE PROCESS, THE MEANING IS FOREVER LOST.

YER RAZZIN' ME.

SEE HOW IT VAINLY COBBLES TOGETHER A STRING OF SOUNDS NOT UNLIKE WORDS?

TAKE. US. TO. MAGIC. THUNDER. MAN.

UH-HUH.

OH, BACK TO ITS NATIVE GRUNTS. I SAY, THE POOR BEAST IS DEVOLVING BEFORE OUR EYES, CHARLES. WE HAVEN'T TIME FOR THIS.

QUICKLY, CREATURE, WHILE YOU STILL RETAIN A GLIMMER OF ANIMAL CUNNING, FETCH US YOUR MAGIC THUNDER MAN!

HIM MAKE BOOM FLASH! GO!

OKAY. YOU MOOKS ARE CORKED. GO HOME AND SLEEP IT OFF, FELLAS.

IT *TALKS!*

OF COURSE IT TALKS! TESLA'S AUTOMATIC MAN, THAT'S WHO HE *IS*. POWERED BY ATOMICS, YOU KNOW.

AUTOMATIC *MAN?*

LOOKS TALLER IN PICTURES.

HAVE ONE HERE SOMEWHERE...

AUTO-MAN! WE'VE NO TIME FOR THIS. MONGRELS, A *HORDE* OF THEM, ARE AFOOT THIS NIGHT!

WHAT, LIKE MONSTERS?

YES! YOU SEE, CHARLES? HE LIVES HERE, HE KNOWS. MONSTERS. MISSHAPEN THINGS.

THIS CITY OF HIS IS AWASH IN THEIR KIND. THE AUTO-MAN KNOWS.

MOST FOLKS CALL ME ROBO, ACTUALLY.

BE A GOOD LAD AND LOCK THOSE DOORS FIRMLY. THEY HAVE A BRUTISH STRENGTH ABOUT THEM. AND IN THEIR NUMBERS!

ROBO? WE MUST SPEAK WITH YOUR MR. TESLA.

I'M AFRAID YOU CAN'T.

WE MUST!

HE CAN'T GO AROUND LIKE THIS ALL THE TIME. HE'D POP.

NEVER MIND THE HOUR, IT IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE THAT WE SPEAK WITH NIKOLA NOW.

THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE.

THIS IS ABSURD!

LOOK, I'M TELLIN' YOU HOW IT IS.

TELL HIM IT'S CHARLES AND HOWARD. HE'LL UNDERSTAND.

MR. TESLA'S ON A SPEAKING TOUR.

SPEAKING TOUR...

HE WON'T BE BACK FOR ANOTHER THREE WEEKS.

THREE ***WEEKS...***

OH, NO, NO, NO.

NO MATTER. WE CAN DO THIS OURSELVES. WE SAW HIM WORK THE CONTROLS LAST TIME. IT'S SIMPLICITY ***ITSELF*** FOR ADVANCED ANGLO-BRAINS SUCH AS OURS TO DISCERN ITS OPERATION.

THE MAN MAY BE A GENIUS, BUT HE'S ONLY EAST EUROPEAN. THE AUTO-MAN CAN TAKE US THERE!

ROBO, ACTUALLY.

YES, OF COURSE, THE AUTO-ROBO. TO ***WARDENCLYFFE!***

I MEANT RATHER IMMEDIATELY.

HELLO?

ROBO-MAN?

WARDENCLYFFE WAS TORN DOWN. YEARS AGO.

IMPOSSIBLE.

THE FACILITY WAS IN A SHAMBLES WHEN WE LAST VISITED AND *THAT* WAS TWENTY YEARS AGO. EVEN IF IT STOOD TODAY, IT'D BE IN SUCH DISRPAIR AFTER ALL THIS TIME. WITHOUT TESLA... IT'S *HOPELESS.*

YOU GUYS WANT TO TELL ME WHAT THIS IS ALL *ABOUT?*

THE END OF THE WORLD, ROBO.

BALONEY.

THE TOTAL EXTINCTION OF ALL LIFE UPON THE EARTH IS AT HAND.

AND IT'S *NIKOLA TESLA'S* FAULT.

OKAY, THAT SOUNDS A LITTLE PLAUSIBLE. JUST WHO ARE YOU GUYS?

I AM CHARLES FORT. MY PARTNER HERE IS HOWARD PHILLIPS LOVECRAFT. UNUSUAL FACTS FIND ME AND UNUSUAL... *THINGS* FIND HIM.

THE END OF EVERYTHING. I WROTE STORIES TO PREPARE MANKIND FOR THIS.

WE WERE AMONG TESLA'S *COHORTS.* IN THE OLD DAYS.

WELL, HOWARD'S FATHER AND I. ANNIE OAKLEY, MASTER WONG, HOUDINI...

OLD DAYS?

BUT NO, LET'S NOT PUBLISH *HOWARD!* NO, WHY DO THAT? HOW COULD THE WORLD POSSIBLY END? WE'RE TOO CLEVER AND HANDSOME TO LET THE VAST IMPOSSIBLE *HORROR* OF THE UNIVERSE DESTROY US!

I KNEW THIS DAY WOULD COME. MONGRELS *OR* EXTRA-DIMENSIONAL ALIEN GODS, EITHER WAY, IT *WOULD* COME.

WE WERE ADVENTURERS!

*YOU GUYS DON'T **LOOK** LIKE ADVENTURERS.*

ADVENTURE WAS MORE A HOBBY. WE'RE ***WRITERS,*** REALLY.

THESE WINDOWS? THEY'RE SECURELY LOCKED, I ASSUME. THEY'RE ***EXPERT*** CLIMBERS, YOU KNOW.

YES, MR. LOVECRAFT. PLEASE DON'T TOUCH ANYTHING!

I'M SURE NIKOLA MENTIONED US TO YOU.

NO, NEVER.

THE SOCIETY DID PART ON *COMPLEX* TERMS.

DID HE EVER TALK TO YOU ABOUT *TUNGUSKA?*

WELL...

1924

ROBO, I WANT YOU TO PROMISE ME SOMETHING.

OF COURSE.

SHOULD AN INTENSE YOUNG MAN OR A WILD-EYED GENTLEMAN EVER APPROACH YOU AND MENTION THE WORD "*TUNGUSKA*", I WANT YOU TO *SHOOT* THEM. PROMISE ME.

BUT, MR. TESLA, YOU'RE A PACIFIST.

YES, ROBO. BUT *YOU* ARE NOT.

*HE, UH. HE SAID SOME **EXCEPTIONAL** THINGS.*

THE THREE OF US REPELLED AN ALIEN INVASION THAT BEGAN IN THE SKIES OVER THE *TUNGUSKA* RIVER IN 1908. THAT'S PART OF SIBERIA.

ALIENS? FROM, WHAT, MARS? THAT'S PLAGIARISM, MR. FORT. I THINK IT'S TIME YOU AND--

DAMMIT, ROBO!

THERE WAS NO *TIME* TO RECORD EVIDENCE OF OUR DEEDS! WE HAD TO ACT WITHOUT QUESTION, WITHOUT HESITATION, TO SAVE ***ALL LIFE*** AS WE KNOW IT.

SO, THE THREE OF YOU, TWO WRITERS AND THE WORLD'S ***MOST FAMOUS*** SCIENTIST, YOU BATTLED ***ALIENS*** AND YOU NEVER TOLD ***ANYONE?***

HOW COULD WE TELL THE WORLD WHAT WE'D DONE? WHO WOULD ***BELIEVE US?*** WORSE YET, WHAT IF THEY ***DID*** BELIEVE US? WHAT OF THE PANIC THAT WOULD SOW? THE ***PARANOIA.***

NO, WE COULDN'T TELL A SOUL. NOT EVEN OUR OWN FAMILIES. IT WAS A SECRET THAT DESTROYED EACH OF US IN ITS WAY.

"I MERELY HAD TO BURN TEN ***YEARS*** OF RESEARCH. NEARLY THE WHOLE OF MY LIFE'S WORK TO THAT POINT. I WAS THE LUCKY ONE."

"NIKOLA TURNED HIS GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT AND HIS DREAM OF FREE ENERGY FOR THE WORLD INTO A RAY CANNON TOO POWERFUL TO LET STAND.

"AND HOWARD. HE WAS BARELY EIGHTEEN YEARS OF AGE AT THE TIME. AT LEAST NIKOLA AND I HAD LED FULL LIVES BEFORE THAT NIGHT. BUT ***HOWARD...***"

WHAT YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND IS THAT HOWARD'S FATHER WAS ONE OF US. HE WAS THE PRESIDENT'S TOP-SECRET OCCULT INVESTIGATOR AND OUR LIAISON TO THE GOVERNMENT. HIS DEATH, IT WAS...UNUSUAL.

HOWARD WAS ***COMPELLED*** TO FINISH HIS FATHER'S WORK. TO FIND THE SOURCE OF THE MADNESS THAT CONSUMED HIM. I TOOK IT UPON MYSELF TO KEEP HOWARD FROM GOING ***TOO*** FAR DOWN THAT PATH.

WRETCHED LITTLE BEASTS COULD BE LURKING *ANYWHERE...*

"BUT HOWARD'S BEEN AT THE MERCY OF DEMONS UNLEASHED THAT NIGHT FOR THE GREATER PORTION OF HIS LIFE. WE THOUGHT THEY WERE ONLY NIGHTMARES. ONLY THE NATURAL RESULT OF BEARING WITNESS TO THE SHEER ***INHUMANITY*** OF HIS FATHER'S WORK. ROBO, WE HAD NO WAY TO KNOW."

TESLA HEAVY INDUSTRIES

Science while you wait!

MR. FORT?

OUR PLAN WAS FORGED IN THE HASTE OF DESPERATION. I TRY NOT TO THINK THAT WE CONSIDERED IT ***PRACTICAL*** TO SHOOT THE THING WITH A SPACE-RAY FROM THE WRONG END OF THE ***PLANET,*** BUT IT WAS THE ONLY WAY.

THERE WAS NO TIME. THE THEORY WAS UNTESTED. THE TECHNOLOGY DIDN'T ***EXIST*** AS OF THAT MORNING. ASSUMPTIONS WERE MADE.

THERE WASN'T ***TIME*** TO CHECK OUR CALCULATIONS. WE NEEDED ONLY PRECISION ENOUGH TO KEEP THE WORLD FROM SPLITTING APART WHEN IT FIRED.

MR. FORT? WHAT ARE YOU TELLING ME?

ROBO. NIKOLA MADE A MISTAKE. WE COULDN'T HAVE KNOWN THE THING EXISTED ***ACROSS TIME.***

WHAT? WHAT THING? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

THE ALIEN DOES NOT OBEY LINEAR TIME.

NOT FOR NOTHIN', BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE, MR. FORT.

DON'T TALK TO ME ABOUT THE *IMPOSSIBLE.* TEN THOUSAND IMPOSSIBLE THINGS HAPPEN *EVERY DAY.*

YEAH, AND ONE OF THEM IS ME GETTING ANY KIND OF PEACE TONIGHT.

NIKOLA'S RAY USED SPACE ITSELF AS A WEAPON. I'M NOT EMBARRASSED TO ADMIT IT WAS ENTIRELY OVER MY HEAD. BUT TESLA SAID IT WARPED SPACE, *PINCHED* IT, AT A SPECIFIC POINT FOR A FRACTION OF A SECOND. THE BACKLASH TO NORMALITY WOULD PRODUCE A TREMENDOUS *UNTHINKABLE* EXPLOSIVE FORCE. ENOUGH TO REDUCE A CITY TO ASH IN AN INSTANT.

YOU DON'T KNOW HOW OFTEN I'VE THANKED GOD THE THING CHOSE SUCH A SECLUDED STRETCH OF LAND.

=GLRGLE=

ROBO, WE *COULDN'T* HAVE KNOWN.

DO YOU HEAR SOMETHING, MR. FORT?

SKRITCH SKRUTCH

IT DEFIES ALL HUMAN COMPREHENSION...

SKLRK

WHAT'S THAT NOISE? IT SOUNDS LIKE SOMEONE'S CHOKING. WHERE'S MR. LOVECRAFT?

WE DIDN'T KNOW, ROBO. MY NOTES WERE ALL DESTROYED TO MAINTAIN THE SECRET. IT TOOK ME TWENTY MORE YEARS TO WORK IT OUT.

MR. LOVECRAFT! YOU SHOULDN'T TOUCH ANY OF THE EQUIPMENT. WHERE ARE YOU?

I LIED TO HOWARD. HE THINKS WE'RE HERE TO SHOOT ANOTHER SPACE RAY INTO RUSSIA. BUT I *LIED* TO HIM. HE COULDN'T KNOW THE TRUTH.

IT COULDN'T KNOW.

SHRAUGKT

I BROUGHT HOWARD BACK SO THAT NIKOLA COULD FINISH WHAT WE BEGAN ALL THOSE YEARS AGO.

I'M SORRY, MR. FORT. I NEED TO FIND...UH, MR. FORT?

BUT WITH HIM GONE, I'M AFRAID THERE'S NO OTHER CHOICE NOW.

WE HAVE TO ***KILL HOWARD PHILLIPS LOVECRAFT.***

WELL, OKAY, HE'S AN ANNOYING LITTLE PILL, BUT--

SP'LURGH!

HOLY SOCKS!

WE HAVE TO KILL HIM BEFORE HE EATS THE WORLD.

OH, GOD, I THINK IT ALREADY GOT MR. LOVECRAFT!

AND THEN PUT ON HIS CLOTHES...?

GF'RAAARRGH!

NO, THAT *IS* HOWARD. OR *USED* TO BE. OR ALWAYS *WAS.*

WAIT, *WHAT?*

WHUMP

AND THAT'S ANOTHER THING. ARE THOSE...ARE THOSE **TEETH** STICKING OUT OF IT?

THE LAWS OF ANATOMY, GEOMETRY, ***PHYSICS,*** THEY MEAN NOTHING TO IT. IT MAY NOT EVEN BE ***IN*** OUR UNIVERSE, BUT RATHER PASSING ***THROUGH*** IT.

SO, WHAT'S IT DOING IN MR. LOVECRAFT'S **HEAD?**

I ***TOLD*** YOU. WE MADE A MISTAKE. WE DIDN'T DESTROY THE ALIEN AT ALL. IT EXISTS ***SIMULTANEOUSLY*** THROUGHOUT TIME STARTING IN 1908. IT WAS ***IN*** HOWARD ALL ALONG, DON'T YOU SEE!

WELL, IT'S IN HERE NOW AND THESE WALLS ARE SOLID, REINFORCED--

CRASH

SKLRRRGL!

HORSEFEATHERS.

WE'VE GOT TO STOP IT.

WELL, YOU DID THIS BEFORE. HOW?

TINK

MY BIG IDEA WAS TO COME HERE AND ASK TESLA.

AH. THEN WE'RE DOOMED. CAN YOU DRIVE?

NO.

WELL, I CAN, BUT NOT LEGALLY. IF ANYONE ASKS, YOU'RE HAVING A HEART ATTACK.

DO YOU HAVE A PLAN?

HORROR ON HOUSTON STREET

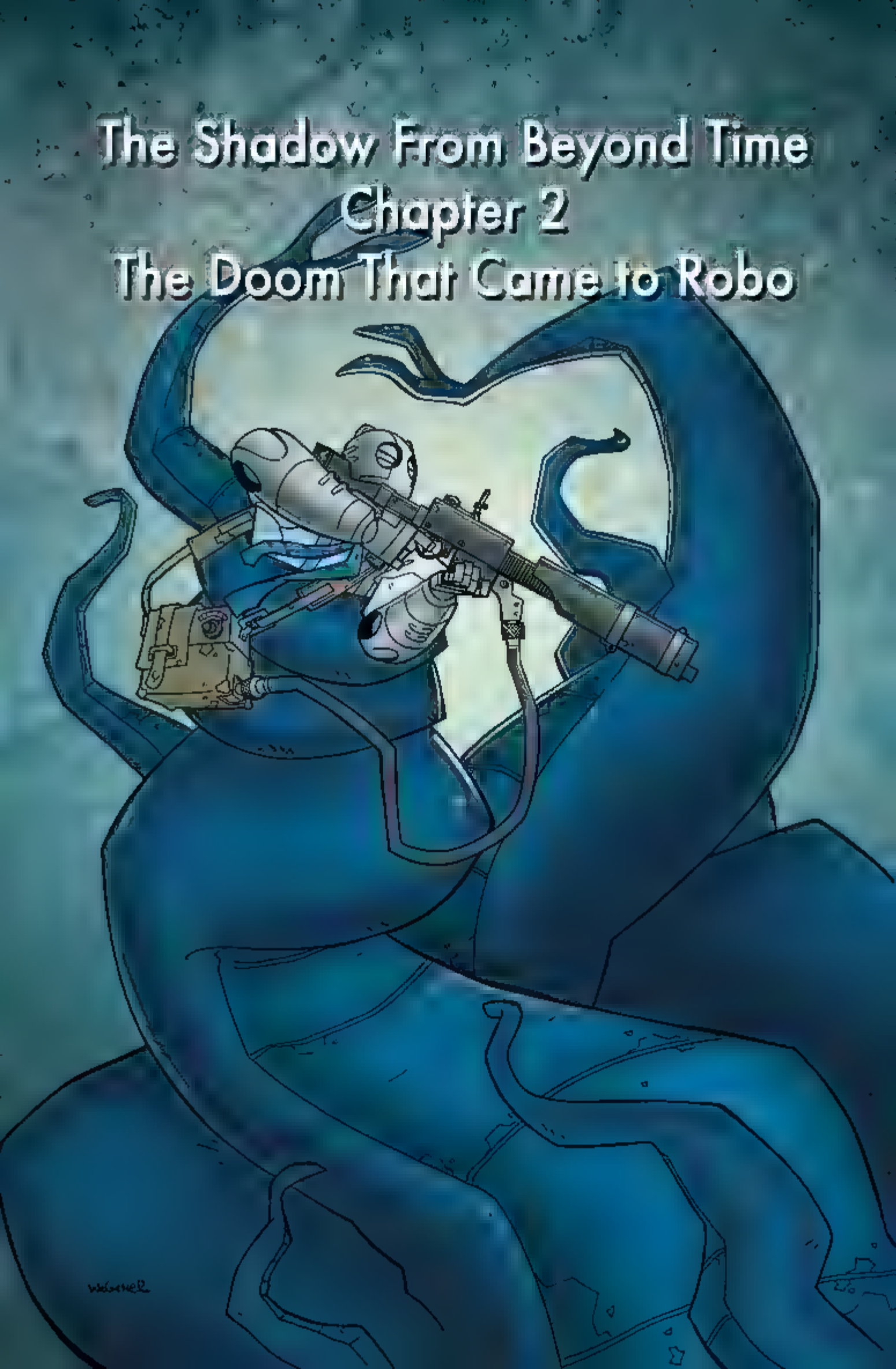
WORDS
BRIAN CLEVINGER

ART
SCOTT WEGENER

COLORS
RONDA PATTISON

LETTERS
JEFF POWELL

The Shadow From Beyond Time
Chapter 2
The Doom That Came to Robo



NEW YORK CITY, NY

YOU'RE DOING GREAT, MR. FORT!

ARGH!

APRIL 3, 1926
8:57PM

SKLURRGLE!

THERE!

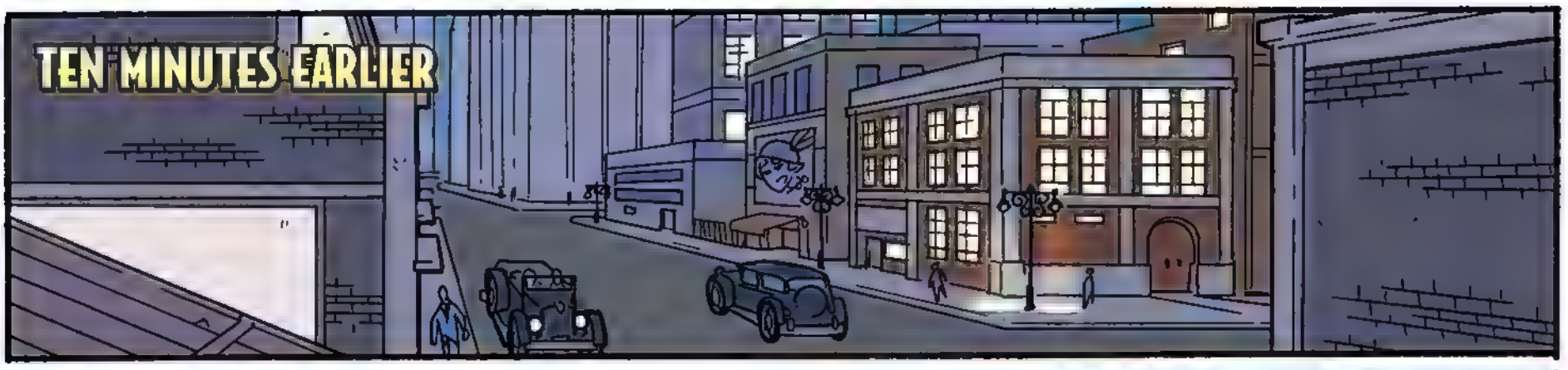
I SEE IT!

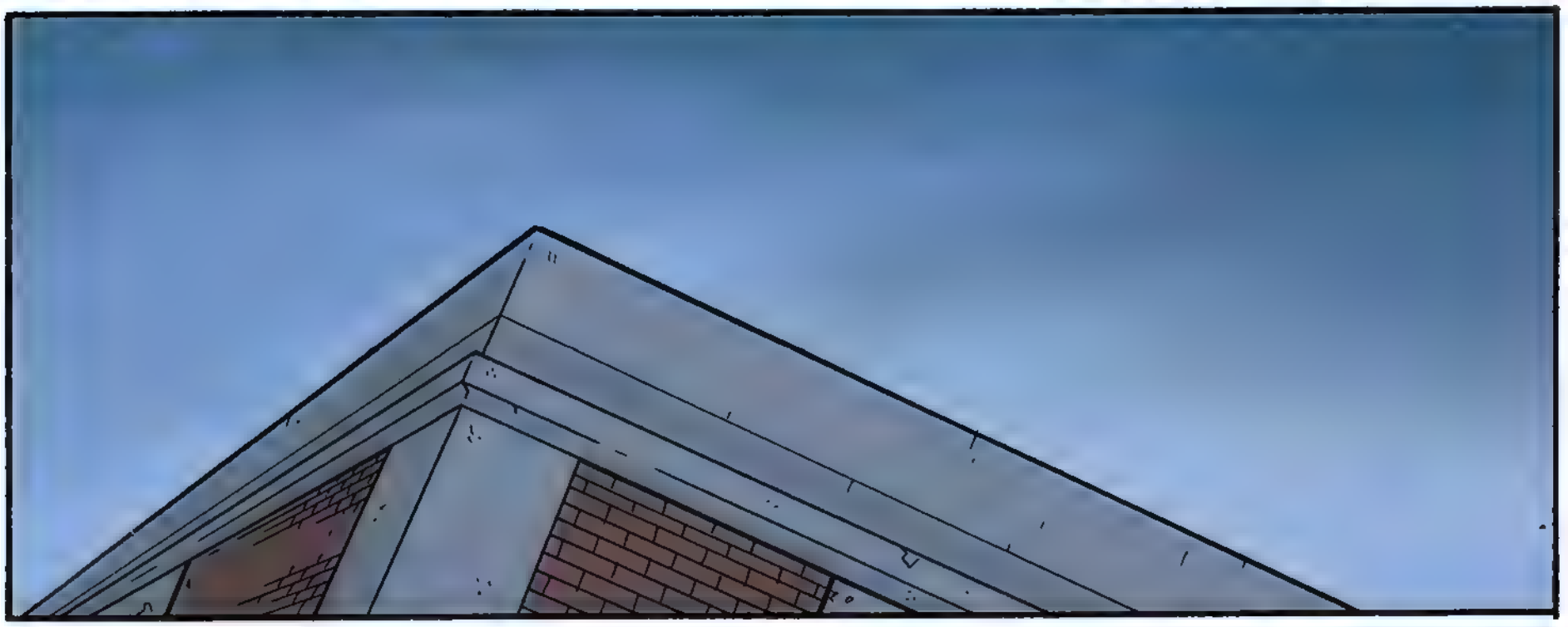
SKREEEEEEE

GUWARGT!

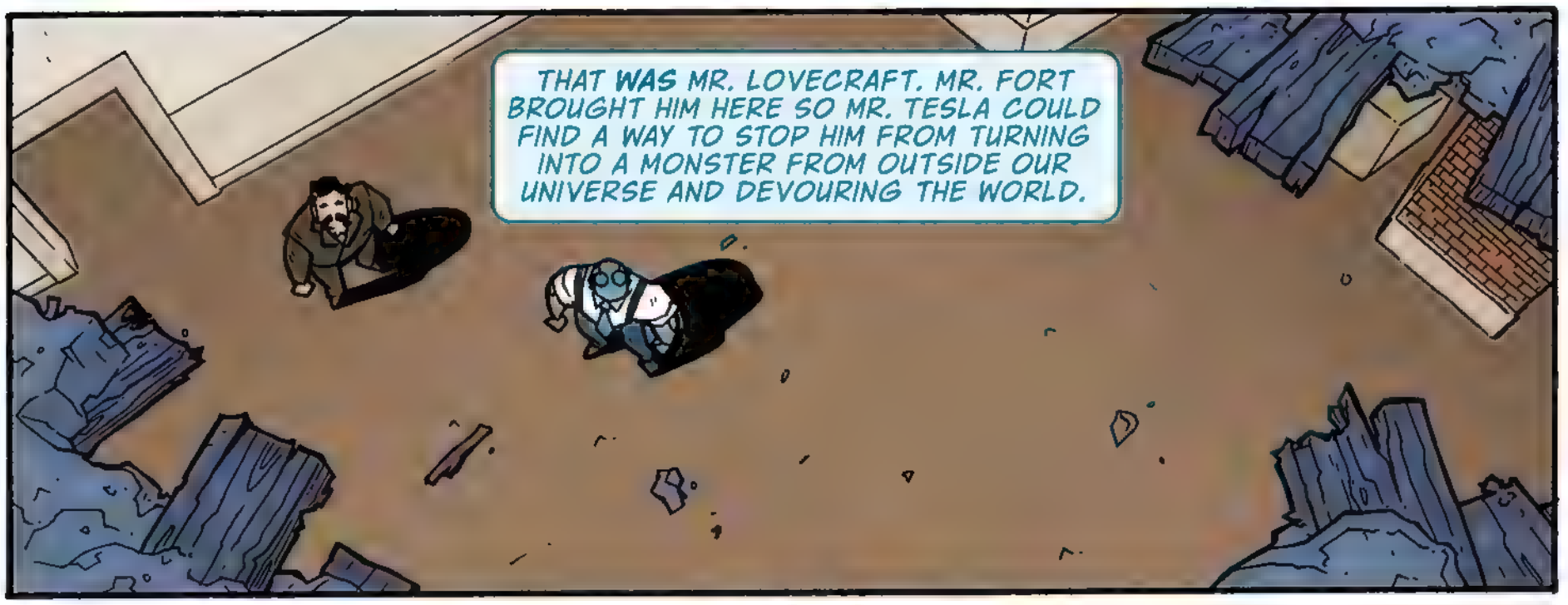
FOOM

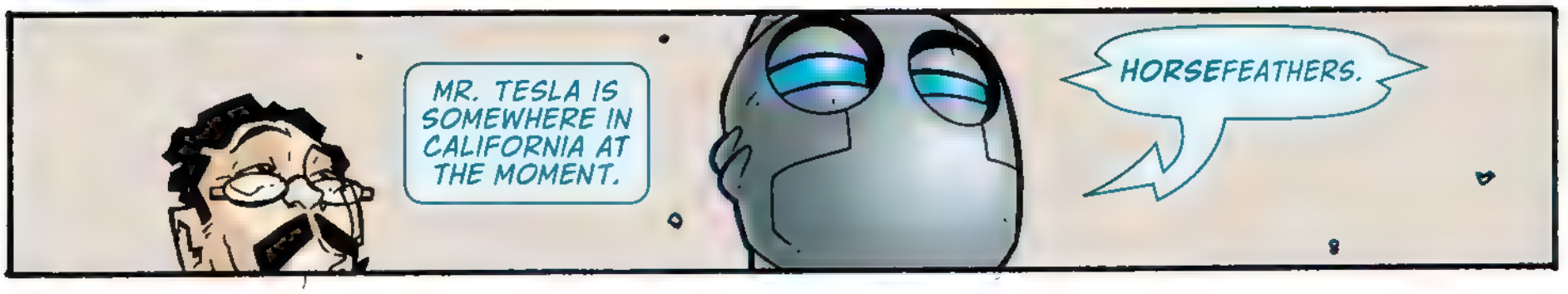
ARGH!


TEN MINUTES EARLIER



CRASH
SPLAAAG!


THAT WAS MR. LOVECRAFT. MR. FORT BROUGHT HIM HERE SO MR. TESLA COULD FIND A WAY TO STOP HIM FROM TURNING INTO A MONSTER FROM OUTSIDE OUR UNIVERSE AND DEVOURING THE WORLD.


MR. TESLA IS SOMEWHERE IN CALIFORNIA AT THE MOMENT.
HORSEFEATHERS.

THESE ARE LIGHTNING GUNS.

THEY COLLECT ELECTRIC CHARGES FROM THE AIR AND BOOST THEM TO **OBSCENELY** DANGEROUS LEVELS THROUGH AN EVEN **MORE** DANGEROUS PROCESS. NOTHING UNUSUAL.

I SAY, A PORTABLE WARDENCLYFFE!

YEAH, JUST WHATEVER YOU DO, **DON'T** MOVE THAT DIAL PAST FIVE.

OR **TO** FIVE.

OR **NEAR** FIVE, REALLY.

IN FACT, SET THE DIAL TO ONE AND THEN **FORGET IT'S THERE.**

IS THIS ENTIRELY SAFE?

NO. NOT EVEN A LITTLE.

THROOOM

GWARG

NEWS

I SAY!

GET THE GUNS!

NEWS

SKREEEEEE

FLOOG!

68-3752
NY 1926

UP. WE DIDN'T PLAN FOR UP.

WAIT...

IT'S...I HAD THE NOTES RIGHT HERE WHERE COULD... NO...YES!

REVERSE!

NEWS

SKRASH

MMMMM

VRUMMM

'EY! YER PAYIN' FOR THIS! I KNOW WHO YOU ARE, YOU'RE PAYIN' FOR THIS!

GOOD WORK, MR. FORT.

UH...?

SKREEM

SGLAKT!

ANOTHER ONE?!

NO, THAT'S THE *SAME* ONE.

THE FIRST ONE WENT INTO THE SKY, THAT ONE CAME OUT OF THE GROUND!

I *TOLD* YOU. IT CAN TELE-TRANSPORT BECAUSE IT *INTERSECTS* OUR UNIVERSE FROM THE OUTSIDE.

SPLAT

YOU CAN'T *BE* OUTSIDE THE UNIVERSE. THAT'S WHAT THE UNIVERSE *IS*! IT'S *EVERYTHING!*

OUR PEDESTRIAN ACCOUNTING OF SPACE AND TIME ARE MEANINGLESS TO IT.

WE NEED TO RETHINK OUR STRATEGY.

"***STRATEGY?*** EVEN IF TESLA WERE HERE AND COULD STOP IT ***AGAIN,*** WE DON'T KNOW WHEN OR WHERE IT'LL COME BACK! IT'S ***HOPELESS!*** WE CAN ONLY HOPE TO ***DELAY*** IT."

"BALONEY. YOU FIGURED OUT ITS APPEARANCE OVER TUNGUSKA AND YOU FIGURED OUT IT WAS BACK NOW."

FWAARG

WELL, THE ASTROLOGICAL DATA I CULTIVATED FROM AZTEC SOURCES CROSS-REFERENCED TO THE METONIC CYCLE TO MATCH WINFRED'S FINDINGS--

YOU CAN TELL ME ALL ABOUT IT WHEN WE'RE DEAD.

HIGHLY UNLIKELY, EDISON WOULD ***NEVER*** ALLOW THE LIKES OF YOU OR I NEAR HIS NECROPHONE.

THE ***POINT*** IS THAT WE'VE GOT A PREDICTIVE MODEL. ALL WE NEED TO DO NOW IS TO MAKE IT PREDICT ***SOONER.*** WE CAN BEAT THIS THING.

WE'VE GOT LIGHTNING GUNS. WE CAN DO ***ANYTHING.***

VRRRRRRRRM

BZZZZZZ BZZZZZZ

AH, IS THAT SOME SORT OF ELECTRO-MATIC DETECTION ARRAY? ARE WE CLOSE?

NOT QUITE, NO. IT'S THE RADIOPHONE.

BZZZZZZ BZZZZZZ

A RADIO COMMUNICATION DEVICE IN AN *AUTOCAR?* I WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT IF I WEREN'T ME.

BZZZZZZ BZZZZZZ

JUST BE QUIET.

BZZZZZZ ZZZ

BZZZZZZ BZZZka-click

EEP!

ROBO.

YES, MR. TESLA?

I NEED YOU TO RECALIBRATE THE OSCILLATION GENERATOR FOR TOMORROW'S...

ROBO, I *REALLY* THINK YOU OUGHT TO--

POKE POKE POKE

SHHH! ARE YOU TRYING TO GET ME IN **TROUBLE**? I'M NOT ALLOWED TO HAVE **COMPANY** OVER.

ROBO?

SPLOOOOK

HELLO? CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?

AUGH!

ARGH!

SKREEEEEEE

SKRRRRANK

I SAY!

CRASH

WHAT IS THAT RACKET?

ER. NOTHING?

ROBO. ARE YOU HAVING A PARTY?

KTUNK KTUNK KER-KLUNK

IT'S PINCHING MY *NOSE!*

UH. A PARTY? NO, SIR.

PINCHING MY NOSE...!

YOU KNOW THERE ARE TO BE NO PARTIES WHILE I AM AWAY.

YES, SIR.

OW, OW.

KAVOYAVICH

THEN EXPLAIN IF YOU WILL THE SOURCE OF THAT INFERNAL DIN.

ER. IT'S THE RADIO?

MUST YOU LISTEN TO YOUR PROGRAMS SO LOUDLY? THINK OF OUR POOR NEIGHBORS.

I'LL TURN IT DOWN AS SOON AS I'M OFF THE PHONE.

FISH

PLEASE DO.

STOP THAT!

YOU STOP! I'M UNTANGLING US!

SLAP SLAP

SLAP SLAP

AS I WAS SAYING, MAKE SURE TO SET THE OSCILLATION GENERATOR TO 2.3 TESLADRACHS.

OTHERWISE WE MAY CAUSE ANOTHER EARTHQUAKE.

YES. IT WOULD BE BAD TO CAUSE A DISASTER.

HONESTLY, ROBO, I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU CAN STUDY WITH THAT PANDEMONIUM.

DIRK DARING, THE DARING DOER OF DERRING DO, IS BEST ENJOYED AT CERTAIN VOLUMES.

SO YOU SAY.

HEY, OUT OF CURIOSITY, CAN LIGHTNING GUNS KILL A TRANSTELEPORTING THING FROM OUT OF SPACE?

IT, UH, THAT'S WHAT DIRK IS FIGHTING THIS WEEK.

TELL ME YOU'RE NOT PLANNING TO WRITE THEM ABOUT THEIR SCIENTIFIC ACCURACY AGAIN.

FWAAARG

OH, THE HACK RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT MOLE MEN EPISODE HAD IT COMING.

LEAVE THOSE POOR PEOPLE ALONE. THEY ONLY WISH TO ENTERTAIN.

SPLORF

SKRASH

THEY SAID HIGHER GRAVITY GAVE THE MOLE MEN TREMENDOUS STRENGTH. WHAT HIGHER GRAVITY? IT'S THE EARTH! IT'S THE SAME GRAVITY!

YES, WELL, REGARDLESS. TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTION, ASSUMING MY NAME WILL NOT BE ATTACHED TO YOUR CORRESPONDENCE...

IT WON'T.

THEORETICALLY SPEAKING, ENOUGH LIGHTNING CAN KILL ANYTHING WITH A PULSE.

DOES THAT THING HAVE A PULSE?

ANYTHING'S POSSIBLE.

YOU'RE A REAL HELP.

WHAT ABOUT THINGS THAT DON'T HAVE A PULSE?

THEY WORKED ON RASPUTIN'S GHOST. YOU'RE NOT PLAYING WITH THE LIGHTNING GUNS, ARE YOU?

I SWEAR, YOU MAKE ONE MISTAKE AND YOU NEVER LIVE IT DOWN. IT'S NOT LIKE ANYONE DIED. PERMANENTLY.

NO, SIR.

YES, SIR.

ARE YOU?

BECAUSE WE'VE TALKED ABOUT THAT.

MR. TESLA? I HAVE TO GO NOW.

DON'T FORGET ABOUT THE OSCILLATOR.

IF YOU DON'T HEAR BACK FROM ME IN THE NEXT HOUR, THE OSCILLATOR WILL NO LONGER BE A PROBLEM.

"UH, IT STOPPED MAYBE IT'S DONE?"

"MY RESEARCH INDICATES THAT IT PROBABLY DOESN'T DISCERN MUCH DETAIL FROM ITS POSITION IN THE *EXOVERSE.*"

ONE, NO SUCH THING. TWO, WHY NOT?

WELL, HOW DO YOU REGARD ANTS?

I DON'T, THEY'RE JUST... OH, I SEE.

"IT'S... MERGING?"

SPLORT

INTO...A LEG?

OH DEAR GOD, I HOPE THAT'S A LEG.

"HOW'S IT DOING THAT?"

SPLORD

I *TOLD* YOU ALREADY. THIS ABOMINATION IS NOT BOUND BY THE RULES THAT GOVERN YOU AND I. TECHNICALLY SPEAKING IT *ALREADY* ENCOMPASSES THE GLOBE. IT JUST HASN'T HAPPENED *YET*.

BALONEY.

IT'S NON-LINEAR *AND* NON-EUCLIDEAN. THAT'S WHAT IT *DOES!* THAT AND EAT THE EARTH.

MAYBE, BUT MY YEARS WITH MR. TESLA HAVE TAUGHT ME THAT THERE'S ONE UNDERLYING SCIENTIFIC PRINCIPLE COMMON TO ALL EXISTENCE.

AND THAT WOULD BE?

EVERYTHING EXPLODES.

CLICKACLICKACLICK

ROBO? YOU EXPLICITLY SAID TO NEVER SET THE DIAL--

MR. FORT, GET OUT OF THE CAR, PLEASE.

AND RUN THE OTHER WAY.

ROBO? ARE YOU *SURE* YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING?

VRMMM

ZKZZZEEEEE

THEY BETTER BUILD A **HELL** OF A STATUE IN MY HONOR AFTER THIS KILLS ME.

RRRROHHHH

BOHHH

DID YOU... JUST SAY MY NAME?

FWAAARG

URRRRRRRM

EUGH.

CHOMP

THE DOOM THAT CAME TO ROBO

WORDS
BRIAN CLEVINGER

ART
SCOTT WEGENER

COLORS
RONDA PATTISON

LETTERS
JEFF POWELL

DECEMBER 9, 1957
NEW YORK CITY

THINK IT'S IMPORTANT?

IT ***BETTER*** BE. I LEFT THE DOUGLAS AIRCRAFT PEOPLE HIGH AND DRY FOR THIS.

THERE WENT ***THAT*** CONTRACT.

WHICH CRAZY IDEA WERE WE FAILING TO SELL THEM?

OH, DON'T WORRY. THEY WEREN'T BUYING IT ANYWAY.

THE ***AIR SPIKE.***

AH, THE ***CRAZIEST*** ONE. IT'S JUST AS WELL THEY DIDN'T GO FOR IT SINCE THE TECHNOLOGY'S ENTIRELY FICTIONAL.

THE WORD IS ***THEORETICAL.***

NO, THEORETICAL IS A TESTABLE, PREDICTIVE MODEL. WHAT WE'VE GOT ARE SOME WEIRD IDEAS ABOUT MATH AND THE ATMOSPHERE. THAT'S ***FICTION.***

CLOVERDALE!

WHAT'S A CLOVERDALE?

A TOWN IN OREGON.

YEAH, *THAT* WAS WORTH TAKING THE RED EYE BACK FOR. THANKS, ROBO. NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I'M GOING TO DROWN MYSELF IN WHISKEY.

I'LL JOIN YOU, MAC. MAYBE ROBO'LL START MAKING SENSE AFTER A COUPLE.

LISTEN. I GOT WIND FROM O.S.U.'S ASTRONOMY DEPARTMENT. **SOMETHING** FELL OUT OF THE SKY OVER OREGON LAST NIGHT. NOW I'M GETTING REPORTS OUT OF THIS CLOVERDALE PLACE. THERE **WAS** AN IMPACT ON ITS OUTSKIRTS. WE'RE TALKING JUST HOURS AGO.

WHAT ARE YOU GETTING AT, ROBO?

AMERICAN NORTHWEST. **DECEMBER.**

SNOW?

NO, HAIL. IT'S HAIL!

YEAH, YOU GUYS ARE **REAL** FUNNY. YOU SHOULD TAKE THIS ACT ON THE ROAD. MOSTLY SO I WON'T HAVE TO PUT UP WITH IT.

WORDS HURT, ROBO.

IT'S SPUTNIK'S **BOOSTER.** I'M SURE OF IT.

NO WAY.

WE RAN THE NUMBERS. REMEMBER? THAT THING WAS GOING TO LAND IN WASHINGTON OR OREGON BY MID-DECEMBER.

LET'S NOT GET TOO EXCITED HERE. COULD BE A COINCIDENCE.

YOU'RE RIGHT, SLIM IT COULD BE ANYTHING. METEORITE, WEATHER BALLOON, MARTIANS, WHO KNOWS. **WE** DON'T.

YOU REALLY WANT TO PIN EVERYTHING ON THIS? BETTER QUESTION: YOU PULLED ME OUT OF THE DOUGLAS DEAL FOR ***THIS?***

THIS IS ALL WE HAVE. IF IT'S NOTHING, FINE, WE'RE RIGHT BACK WHERE WE STARTED. BUT IF IT'S A PIECE OF WHAT PUT **SPUTNIK** IN ORBIT, WE'LL KNOW WHAT THE RUSSIANS ARE CAPABLE OF.

BECAUSE RIGHT NOW? THE ARMY IS TELLING EISENHOWER THAT THE RUSSIANS HAVE A **THOUSAND** OF THESE MISSILES POINTED AT THE U.S. AND WHEN THE RUSSIANS READ IN OUR PAPERS ABOUT HOW WE'RE BUILDING A THOUSAND MISSILES IN RESPONSE, **THEY'LL** BUILD A THOUSAND **MORE,** AND ON AND ON UNTIL SOMEONE HAS A BAD DAY AND IT ENDS THE WORLD.

BUT THE RUSSIANS DON'T ***HAVE*** A THOUSAND MISSILES.

EXACTLY. AMERICAN MILITARY STRATEGY **RIGHT NOW** IS TO STEER THE WORLD TOWARD INEVITABLE NUCLEAR ANNIHILATION BASED ON **COMPLETE IGNORANCE.**

BUT WE ALSO "KNEW" THE RUSSIANS WERE YEARS BEHIND OUR BOYS IN ROCKETRY. NOW THEY'VE GOT TWO SPUTNIKS AND WE'VE GOT SMOKING WRECKS. WE DON'T KNOW WHAT WE KNOW.

HENCE, CLOVERDALE. WE FIND WHAT PUT SPUTNIK IN ORBIT, WE FIND OUT WHAT THE RUSSIANS ARE REALLY WORKING WITH.

EXACTLY. WE'RE SCIENTISTS. WE CAN'T LET IGNORANCE DICTATE THE COURSE OF MANKIND.

HOLD IT, IRA WHAT IF IT IS MARTIANS?

THAT'S WHY WE'RE BRINGING THE GUNS.

WAIT, WAIT. THE ARMY'LL GET TO IT BEFORE WE EVER DO. IF IT'S ANY KIND OF THREAT TO THEIR NEW RIDICULOUS BUDGET, THEY'LL JUST BURY IT.

OUR ASTRONOMER FRIENDS WILL HAVE SEALED OFF THE AREA DUE TO "DANGEROUS COSMIC RAY EXPOSURE" BEFORE THE ARMY GETS THERE.

HOW REAL IS THAT?

ROUGHLY NOT AT ALL. BUT IT WILL SOUND VERY REAL TO SOLDIERS WHO HAVE NO REASON TO DOUBT WHAT PATRIOTIC SCIENTISTS TELL THEM.

HA! WE'LL BE IN AND OUT OF THERE LONG BEFORE THE ARMY FIGURES OUT WHAT'S GOING ON.

BINGO.

ROBO, WE *NEED* TO TALK ABOUT THE QUARTERLY--

DEANDRA, YOU'RE A GENIUS. I KNOW YOU CAN KEEP THE STOCKHOLDERS OFF OUR BACKS.

WE DON'T *HAVE* STOCKHOLDERS!

SEE? KNOWING STUFF LIKE THAT IS WHY YOU'RE IN CHARGE.

N1731R

...JUST TO WATCH HIM DIE. ♪ WHEN I HEAR THAT WHISTLE BLOWIN'... ♪

...I MAKE IT PRETTY GOOD UNTIL ♪ THAT MOON COMES SHINING...

AIRPORT

WASN'T I JUST ON THIS COAST?

GAS

ATOMIC COLA

MAYBE I'M JUST WARPED FROM GROWING UP IN NEW YORK.

NO ARGUMENT HERE.

BUT SHOULDN'T THERE BE, Y'KNOW, *PEOPLE?*

STATION'S EMPTY. WHAT GIVES?

NO DIAL TONE, NO OPERATOR!

THINK THE ARMY TOOK OUR COSMIC RADIATION HOOEY A LITTLE *TOO* SERIOUSLY AND EVACUATED THE TOWN?

IT'S TOO...CLEAN. TOO ORDERLY. AND THERE'S NO QUARANTINE OR GUARD POST.

FILL 'ER UP. I'LL LEAVE A NOTE.

had to gas up in the interests of science. This should cover it.

Thank you,
Atomic Robo

YOU'RE LOST, AREN'T YOU.

NOT NECESSARILY.

HOW CAN YOU BE LOST? YOU HAVE A COMPASS IN YOUR **BRAIN.**

ALL THIS SASS WON'T GET US THERE ANY FASTER.

FINALLY.

WE'RE THERE?

WE ARE, BUT NO ONE **ELSE** IS.

OKAY, SERIOUSLY NOW. SOMEONE TELL ME WHAT'S GOING ON BEFORE I FLIP MY WIG.

LET'S JUST EASE UP. WE'RE SCIENTISTS. THERE'S A RATIONAL EXPLANATION HERE. IT EXISTS. ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS FIND IT.

NOT HELPING.

BEFORE IT FINDS **US.**

WE CAME ALL THIS WAY FOR A REASON. LET'S CHECK THE IMPACT SITE, AND **THEN** WE CAN FIGURE OUT WHERE EVERYONE WENT.

DOES IT FEEL *WARMER* TO YOU GUYS?

THAT'S JUST FROM WALKING AROUND.

NO, I FEEL IT TOO.

HMMM...

...THERE'S NO SNOW ON THAT HOUSE.

THE IMPACT WAS, WHAT, TWENTY HOURS AGO? IT CAN'T BE GIVING OFF *THAT* KIND OF HEAT, RIGHT?

SEARCH ME.

WELL, IT'S NOT A SPUTNIK.

C'MON, ROBO. WE KNEW IT WAS A LONG SHOT.

I WAS SURE.

LET'S GO.

GFIARG

MARTIAN!

SON OF A--!

RRRROHHHH

KCHAK

BOHHHH

ROBO. DO YOU *KNOW* THIS ROCK?

AND HOW MUCH DOES IT HATE YOU?

SPLAAAG

WE HAVE TO RUN.

WE NEED A PLAN!
RUNNING IS THE PLAN.
GO ON, I'LL KEEP ITS HEAD DOWN!
IT DOESN'T HAVE A HEAD.
THEN I'M SHOOTING IT BECAUSE I HATE IT.
EVERYONE INSIDE!
=HUFF=
BUDDA BUDDA
C'MON!
FWAM
NO MOVEMENT.
OKAY... WE'RE INSIDE... NOW WHAT?
I HADN'T... THOUGHT THAT FAR...
I GUESS I NEVER TOLD YOU GUYS ABOUT THE MONSTER FROM OUTSIDE OUR UNIVERSE THAT WANTS TO DEVOUR THE EARTH.
NO, I GUESS YOU *DIDN'T.*

IT'S THIS BEING OR FORCE OR, I DON'T KNOW, **MALEVOLENCE.** TESLA STOPPED IT IN 1908 WITH A RAY GUN AS STRONG AS THE A-BOMB. I **BARELY** STOPPED IT IN '26. AND NOW IT'S **HERE.**

IF IT'S **BEEN** STOPPED, WHY DOES IT NEED TO BE STOPPED AGAIN AND **AGAIN?**

THIS **THING** EXISTS SIMULTANEOUSLY **ACROSS** TIME.

IF LEFT UNCHECKED, IT'LL CONTINUE TO EXPAND ACROSS **EVERYTHING** UNTIL NOTHING BUT **IT** WILL HAVE **EVER** EXISTED.

SO, EVEN IF WE STOP IT **NOW,** WE HAVE **NO GUARANTEE** THAT IT WON'T **EVENTUALLY** WIN IN THE **FUTURE.**

WHERE IT WOULD THEN **RETROACTIVELY** EXPAND INTO THE PAST **UNMAKING** EVERYTHING THAT EVER WAS. NOTE THAT WE WON'T BE ABLE TO PERCEIVE, ANTICIPATE, OR FIGHT THAT. WE WILL JUST CEASE TO BE.

SO, WE'RE ALL GOING TO DIE NO MATTER **WHAT** WE DO.

WE DID **NOT** SURVIVE OPERATION: PAPERCLIP JUST TO BE EATEN BY A MONSTER THAT DOESN'T EXIST.

I SAY WE GET TO THE CAR, GRAB THE SCIENCE GUNS, AND SHOOT THAT THING INTO **CONSTITUENT PARTICLES!**

KTHUD

WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?

MAYBE SOMEONE'S HOME?

MAN, HOW CAN YOU EVEN *THINK* IT'S NOT ANOTHER MONSTER?

WELL, *SOMEONE'S* GOT TO GO CHECK.

YOU KNOW *TECHNICALLY* THERE'S ONLY *ONE* ATOMIC ROBOT IN THE WORLD. *YOU GUYS* ARE REPLACEABLE.

I'M FIRING THOSE JERKS IF THEY LIVE THROUGH THIS.

I THINK IT WAS JUST THE HOUSE SETTLING.

THAT'S NOT HOW HOUSES SETTLE, ROBO.

KAKLUD THUD

SON OF A--!

DON'T SHOOT!

HELP ME

SHE'S STILL IN THERE! SHE'S STILL ALIVE!

HOLY GOD...

GOD'S GOT *NOTHING* TO DO WITH THIS...

WE WILL HELP YOU. YOU'RE GOING TO LIVE, I PROMISE. BUT...

...WE'VE GOT GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE YOU KILL US.

FWAM

SPLORGT!

OUTSIDE. WE GO OUTSIDE NOW.

BUH?

SKRASH

BUH.

SLIM'S CHECKED OUT.

NO, NO I'M FINE. I JUST...THERE WAS THIS TERRIBLE MOMENT.

JUST THE *ONE?*

FOR A SECOND I...THERE WAS THIS...HORRIBLE CLARITY.

SLIM, KEEP IT TOGETHER. WE JUST NEED TO KILL THE MARTIAN INSANITY ROCK AND YOU'LL BE OKAY.

YEAH. YEAH, I'M OKAY.

I'M--

SPLAAG!

HOLY DAMMIT!

GFLUGT!

CAR, SCIENCE GUNS, CONSTITUENT PARTICLES. NOW.

SLIM...

NOW.

WHAT ABOUT SLIM?

HE'S FINE. HE'LL BE FINE. WE HAVE TO GET TO THE CAR!

UWAARG

SGUKT

FOOM

GFLRRG

OKAAAAY. YOU NEED TO RUN FASTER.

GET IN!

GRANK

JUST DRIVE. I'LL GET COZY BACK HERE WITH A SCIENCE GUN AND HOLD...

BOHHHHHHHH

BOHHHHHHHH

I THINK WE FOUND EVERYONE!

NEW PLAN. DRIVE AWAY FOREVER.

SKUGL

KLRRGT

GET THE LEAD OUT!

UR-UR-URRRRRM

FWUD KTHUD

SKREEEE

FWAM

AAAAAH!

GUYS, WE NEED TO MOVE!

FUAAUG

SKRSH

HELP MEEE

AUGH!

AHHH!

FWAK

KEEP DRIVING!

BOHHHHH

BOHHHHHHHH

DIIEES!

OH, **REALLY?** I GOTTA HAND IT TO YOU, HORRIBLE ALIEN BLOB. YOU'RE **DETERMINED.**

AHHHH!

IT DOESN'T END LIKE THIS. GUYS?

IT DOESN'T END LIKE THIS!

GLURK

SKRAWLWK

TESLA KILLED YOU WITH A WEAPON THAT RUPTURED SPACE-TIME BECAUSE YOU WERE OUT IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE. SO THEN YOU STRUCK A POPULATED AREA, BUT I WAS ABLE TO KILL YOU BY DRIVING AN EXPLODING CAR UP YOUR BRAIN.

GUWURRG

AND THIS TIME, WELL THIS ONE'S JUST ACES. I MEAN, MAKING YOURSELF FLOAT SO YOU'RE SAFE FROM CARS? THAT'S GOOD. INTERSECTING WITH A THOUSAND PEOPLE INSTEAD OF ONE? THAT'S GREAT. BUT TO GO THAT EXTRA MILE AND LEAVE THEM JUST ENOUGH HUMANITY SO I COULDN'T REALLY FIGHT BACK. GENIUS.

WHY DOES IT HAVE SO MANY EYES!

TEETH, IT HAS TEETH!

YOU MUST REALLY HATE ME TO GO OUT OF YOUR WAY TO CONCOCT AN UNNECESSARILY SADISTIC MORAL DILEMMA LIKE THAT.

OR ARE YOU JUST MOCKING THE WHOLE CONCEIT OF MORALS? MAYBE FROM YOUR EXPANDED VANTAGE POINT THE WHOLE IDEA OF RIGHT AND WRONG SEEMS LIKE A SILLY LITTLE DANCE.

KILL IT, KILL IT!

AHHH! AHHH!

BUT WHAT DO I KNOW? I ONLY SPENT THE LAST THIRTY YEARS STUDYING HIGHER DIMENSIONAL MATH SO I'D KNOW I COULD DO **THIS.**

SGLURF!

AT THE FARM OF MADNESS

BRIAN CLEVINGER
WORDS

SCOTT WEGENER
ART

RONDA PATTISON
COLORS

JEFF POWELL
LETTERS

The Shadow From Beyond Time
Chapter 4
The Crawling Chaos

CORNELL UNIVERSITY, 1971

DR. SAGAN, MY TEAM AND I WILL ENCOUNTER AN EXTRATERRESTRIAL LIFE FORM IN FOUR MONTHS. WE'D LIKE YOU TO DEVELOP INSTRUMENTATION TO STUDY IT.

HE HUNG UP.

MAYBE YOU SHOULD'VE SAID YOU WEREN'T A *NUT* FIRST.

DR. SAGAN, I AM NOT A NUT.

THAT DIDN'T WORK.

MAYBE YOU SHOULD INTRODUCE YOURSELF SO HE KNOWS YOU'RE TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT NOT BEING A NUT.

DR. SAGAN, THIS IS ATOMIC ROBO. WE SHOULD CHAT OVER LUNCH, SAY, TOMORROW.

MMHMM.

?

WELL, NO, I GUESS **YOU'D** DO ALL THE EATING. LUNCH IS JUST A WAY TO TRICK YOU INTO LISTENING TO ME.

DINER

EAT

SO. IN FOUR MONTHS' TIME, THE EARTH WILL BE VISITED BY A HYPER-***DIMENSIONAL*** ENTITY THAT, IF LEFT UNCHECKED, WILL EXPAND TO ***DEVOUR*** NOT MERELY THE ***UNIVERSE,*** BUT HISTORY ***ITSELF*** FROM AN UNKNOWABLE POINT IN THE ***FUTURE*** FROM WHICH WE CANNOT HOPE TO DEFEND ***AGAINST.***

YES.

AND YOU HAVE BEEN FIGHTING THIS ***BEING*** SINCE 1908.

NO, MR. ***TESLA*** STOPPED IT THEN. I WASN'T INTRODUCED TO THIS THING UNTIL IT CAME OUT OF H.P. LOVECRAFT'S HEAD IN 1926.

RED ARROW

Home

Diner Day

HM, YES, HOW ***SILLY*** OF ME.

THAT'S THE PROBLEM WITH THIS CREATURE. IT'S NONLINEAR, SO STOPPING IT IN THE ***PAST*** DOESN'T MEAN IT WON'T ***STILL*** EXIST IN THE ***FUTURE.*** CHARLES FORT PUT TOGETHER A FORMULA TO PREDICT WHEN AND WHERE IT WOULD NEXT INTERSECT WITH REALITY.

WHEN IT WORKED AT ALL, IT WOULD GIVE A FEW HOURS OF WARNING, A DAY AT THE MOST. BUT I'VE SPENT THE LAST FORTY YEARS ***IMPROVING*** THAT FORMULA WITH DATA FROM THE MONSTER'S SUBSEQUENT INTERSECTIONS.

WE KNOW THE **THING** IS FOUR MONTHS AWAY. TECHNICALLY, IT'S ALREADY THERE AND **WE'RE** FOUR MONTHS AWAY. **ANYWAY,** WE HAVE THE RARE OPPORTUNITY TO **STUDY** IT BEFORE WE KILL IT THIS TIME.

I **KNOW** THIS ISN'T WHAT YOU HAVE IN MIND WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT LIFE OUTSIDE OF EARTH. HELL, I DON'T KNOW IF THIS THING COUNTS AS **BEING** "ALIVE." BUT YOU'RE THE CLOSEST THING WE HAVE TO AN EXPERT HERE, AND THE FUTURE OF **ALL** SENTIENT LIFE IN THE **UNIVERSE** MAY DEPEND UPON US LEARNING WHATEVER WE **CAN.**

DINER

EAT

ROBO

ALL SENTIENT LIFE IN THE UNIVERSE.

WIPED OUT. EVERYTHING, BACK TO THE BIG BANG, JUST GONE AND NEVER WAS.

THESE ARE EXTRAORDINARY CLAIMS.

HELP US, AND IN FOUR MONTHS YOU'LL HAVE EXTRAORDINARY **PROOF.**

URUBAMBA VALLEY, PERU
FOUR MONTHS LATER

READY TO MEET THE IMPOSSIBLE?

I'M STILL UNCONVINCED THAT ANYTHING ***UNUSUAL*** WILL OCCUR.

AND YET HERE YOU ARE, HELPING US TO RECORD IT.

SCRRRRRRSH

THE SHEER ***AUDACITY*** OF YOUR CLAIMS PIQUED MY ***CURIOSITY.*** SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS IS DEAD WITHOUT A WILLINGNESS TO EMBARK UPON AT LEAST A FEW ***CAREFULLY CALCULATED*** RIDICULOUS IDEAS.

AND WHAT HAVE YOU CALCULATED ABOUT MY RIDICULOUS IDEAS?

AN ASTRONOMER CAN ENJOY A LONG AND ***MEANINGFUL*** CAREER CONTINUALLY PROVING EINSTEIN CORRECT. BUT PROVE HIM ***WRONG,*** AND FUTURE ASTRONOMERS WILL ENJOY LONG, MEANINGFUL CAREERS PROVING ***YOU*** CORRECT.

*AH, SO YOU FINALLY ADMIT THERE **COULD** BE AN EXOVERSAL BEING TO RECORD.*

THERE ***COULD*** BE ANYTHING. THAT IS WHY THE SKEPTICAL ***INTERROGATION*** OF THE COSMOS IS SUCH AN IMPORTANT ***PROCESS.*** REGARDLESS OF THE RESULTS OF TODAY'S ***OBSERVATIONS,*** OUR WORK WILL ***ADD*** TO THE BODY OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE. WHO IS RIGHT AND WHO IS WRONG IS ***IRRELEVANT*** IN THE FACE OF THAT. ***ONE*** THING CONCERNS ME THOUGH.

ADMITTEDLY, HIGHER DIMENSIONAL MATH ISN'T MY ***SPECIALTY,*** BUT IT SEEMS TO ME THAT IF THIS ENTITY IS TRULY FROM, AS YOU SAY, "***OUTSIDE***" OUR OWN UNIVERSE, I DON'T SEE HOW YOU PLAN TO ***CONTAIN*** IT FOR US TO STUDY.

THAT'S WHY ALL NON-ESSENTIAL STAFF ARE BACK AT CAMP, AND WHY I'M BRINGING CRATES FILLED WITH LIGHTNING GUNS.

THEY LOOK HEAVY.

YOU JUST CONCERN YOURSELF WITH THAT INCREDIBLY EXPENSIVE DETECTION ARRAY.

IT'D HAVE COST TWICE WHAT IT DID HAD I NOT SIMPLY MIMICKED THE INSTRUMENT COMPLEMENT FROM PIONEER 10.

KLUNK

ABOUT THAT. ARE EVEN HALF THOSE SENSORS APPLICABLE? WE'RE NOT LOOKING FOR MOONS AND SUPERNOVAE HERE.

THESE ARE SOME OF THE MOST SENSITIVE INSTRUMENTS CONCEIVED BY MAN. IF THERE'S A HINT OF THE CREATURE, THEY WILL FIND IT.

bdeet

HMM. FIELD COHERENCE IS ALL OVER THE PLACE.

NO, THIS IS ALL WRONG. CURRENT ON THE ZORTH AXIS ISN'T EVEN A THIRD OF WHAT WE RAN IN SIMULATIONS. SIMPLE FIX THOUGH.

CLATTA CLICK CLACK

"ZORTH" AXIS?

YEAH. THE FIFTH CARDINAL DIRECTION.

I'M SORRY; I THOUGHT YOU SAID, "THE *FIFTH* CARDINAL DIRECTION."

I DID.

I'M TRYING TO THINK OF HOW TO SAY, "BUT THAT'S STUPID" WITHOUT RESORTING TO THE WORD "***STUPID.***"

I DISCOVERED IT HYPERSPATIALLY CURLED UP INTO THE OTHER FOUR IN 1967. IT'S PROBABLY THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CARTOGRAPHIC DISCOVERY SINCE THEY FIGURED OUT **LONGITUDE.** IT'S THE LYNCHPIN OF MY CONTAINMENT FIELD.

THIS IS THE FIRST ***I'VE*** HEARD OF IT.

AH. THAT. YEAH. WELL, UH, THE THING IS.

ROBO.

OKAY, SO ***MAYBE*** IT'S A WILDLY ***UNTESTED*** THEORY. ***THERE.*** I SAID IT.

WITHOUT TESTING IT'S NOT A "***THEORY***", IT'S JUST ***WORDS.***

IT'S NOT LIKE THERE'S A ***WEALTH*** OF EXOVERSAL MATERIAL ***AVAILABLE*** FOR EXPERIMENTATION, Y'KNOW. TODAY ***IS*** THE TEST!

WHY AM I ONLY LEARNING OF THIS ***NOW?***

IF I TOLD YOU WE'D BE USING ***UNTRIED*** METHODS BASED ON AN ***UNTESTED*** THEORY ABOUT A ***HYPOTHETICAL*** CARDINAL DIRECTION THAT ***CAN'T*** BE OBSERVED WITHIN OUR UNIVERSE TO CATCH A ***MONSTER*** THAT DOESN'T TECHNICALLY ***EXIST,*** YOU'D HAVE HUNG UP THE PHONE! ***AGAIN.***

AND I'D HAVE BEEN *RIGHT* TO DO IT.

AND *THAT'S* WHY I HAD TO LIE. A LITTLE.

IT WAS A FOUR-MONTH CAMPAIGN OF *DECEPTION* TO KEEP ME FROM THE TRUTH.

GRANTED, *BUT* I WAS ONLY LYING A *LITTLE BIT* EVERY TIME.

OKAY. WHATEVER WE DISCOVER, WHEN WE NAME IT, WE'LL PUT *YOUR* NAME IN FRONT OF MINE.

ALL RIGHT? LET'S DO SOME *SCIENCE.*

CAMERAS ON?

WE ARE GO. HIT IT.

DID YOU REMEMBER TO PRESS THE BUTTON?

OF COURSE I DID!

HRM. I'M REGISTERING ***NONSENSICAL*** DATA. DISTANCE TO THE CONTAINMENT CAGE IS CURRENTLY READING AS INFINITY ***MINUS ONE*** METERS.

IT MAY AS WELL SAY "A ***JILLION*** OR PERHAPS "***CADILLAC.***"

*NO! THAT'S A BREACH OF THE ZORTH AXIS INTO REAL SPACE-TIME, IT'S **WORKING!***

YOUR ***TECHNOBABBLE*** WON'T MAKE A NUMBER THAT DOESN'T EXIST ANY MORE MEANINGFUL.

ALMOST THERE...

SPLAAAG!

ROBO. I THINK I'M INSANE NOW.

THAT'S **GOOD**, YOU'D BE CRAZY NOT TO BE. BUT DON'T LOOK DIRECTLY AT IT **TOO** MUCH. IT CAN GET IN YOUR HEAD AND I **DON'T** MEAN THAT METAPHORICALLY.

ROHHHHH

BOHHHH

AWW, YOU REMEMBER ME? THAT'S SWEET.

C'MON...

THERE I'M CALLING IT. FIELD IS SECURE. OUR GUEST'S NOT GOING **ANYWHERE.**

HOW YOU HOLDING UP, CARL?

I REQUIRE A STIFF DRINK. SEVERAL OF THEM, IN FACT. ENOUGH TO PARALYZE A **COW.**

GLRRF

THAT CREATURE CAN'T BE REAL.

IT REALLY CAN'T, BUT THERE IT WAS.

IT LOOKED AT ME.

OH, IT DOES THAT.

IT KNEW YOUR NAME.

YEAH. I'M STARTING TO THINK IT'S FOLLOWING ME, BUT THAT MEANS IT'S ONLY HERE BECAUSE I'M HERE, BUT I'M ONLY HERE BECAUSE IT WAS GOING TO BE HERE. SO, I'M TRYING NOT TO THINK THAT.

DON'T. TRUST IN CAUSALITY IS PERHAPS THE FOUNDATION OF SANITY. DOUBTING IN IT WOULD BE A LIVING NIGHTMARE.

OVERALL, I GOTTA SAY, YOU'RE TAKING THIS RATHER WELL.

ASTRONOMY IS A LONG AND RELENTLESS LESSON THAT THE UNIVERSE IS UNDER NO OBLIGATION TO MATCH UP WITH OUR EXPECTATIONS.

ALSO, THE ALCOHOL HELPS.

GLUG

IT'S LATE. GET SOME SLEEP, WE'LL HAVE A TON OF DATA TO GO OVER BY MORNING.

YES, OF COURSE. AND BY LUNCH WE'LL TEASE SOMETHING BRILLIANT OUT OF IT TO CHANGE THE WORLD FOREVER AND CALL IT THE SAGAN-ROBO CONJECTURE.

TECHNICALLY MY LAST NAME IS TESLA.

YOUR NAME IS DR. ATOMIC ROBO TESLA?

YEAH.

THEY SHOULD MAKE COMIC BOOKS OUT OF YOU.

REST UP. I'LL MAKE SURE EVERYTHING RUNS SMOOTHLY UNTIL MORNING.

SGLUUURG

LOOKS LIKE IT'S JUST YOU AND ME, CHUCKLES.

NOT SO TOUGH WHEN YOU'RE LOCKED IN A DIMENSIONAL MATRIX, ARE YA?

WELL, YOU'RE GOING TO BE IN THERE FOR A WHILE. SO, GET COMFORTABLE.

TEMPORAL MECHANICS MADE EASY

TEMPORAL MECHANICS
MADE EA

TEMPORAL MECHANICS

Crom!

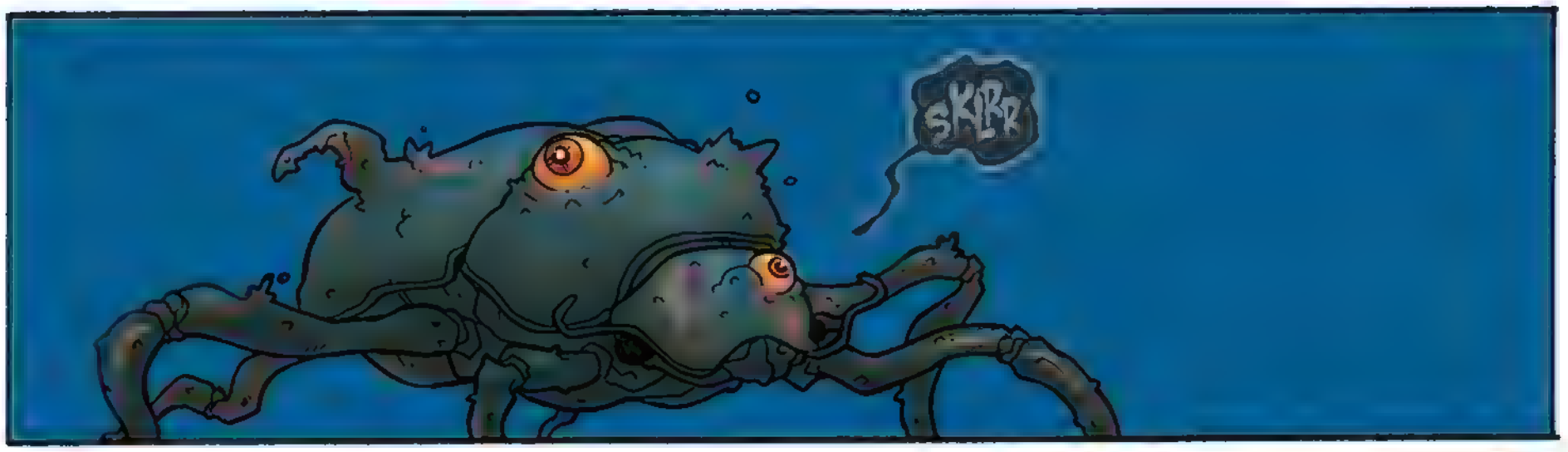
CONAN

DAMMIT, CONAN, HE'S A WIZARD. HOW DO YOU NOT SEE THAT?

?

EAUGH!

SWAP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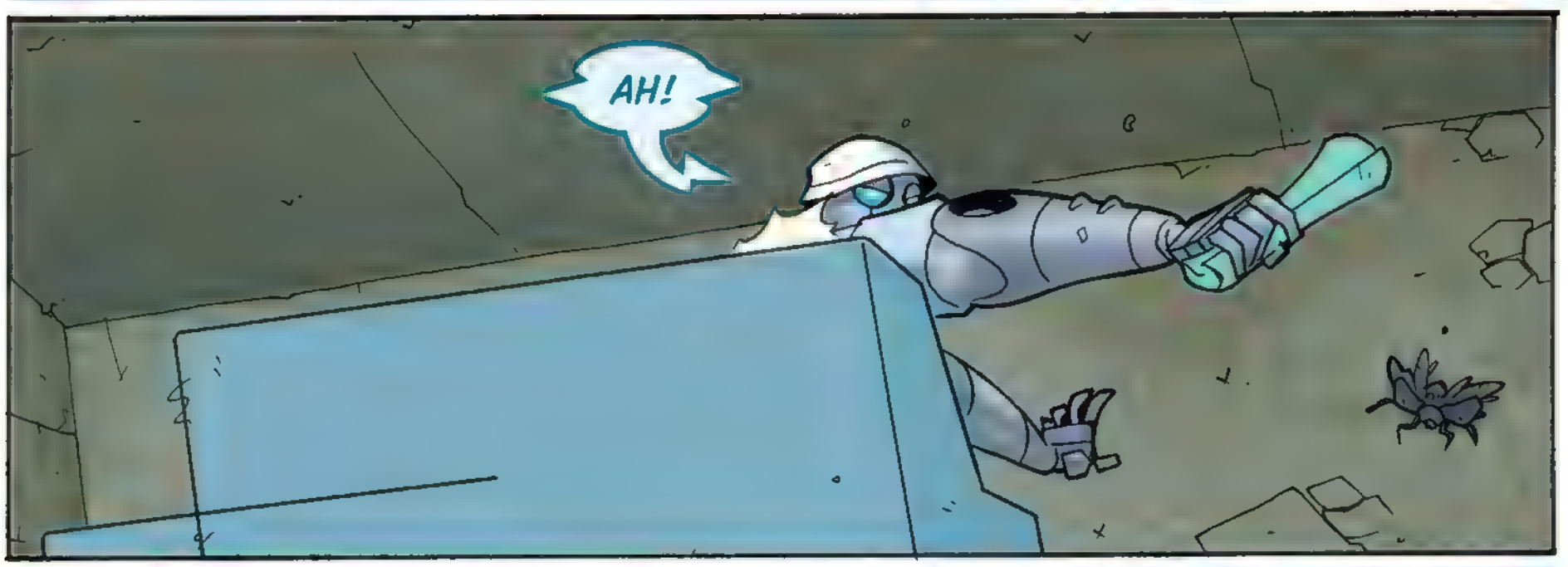
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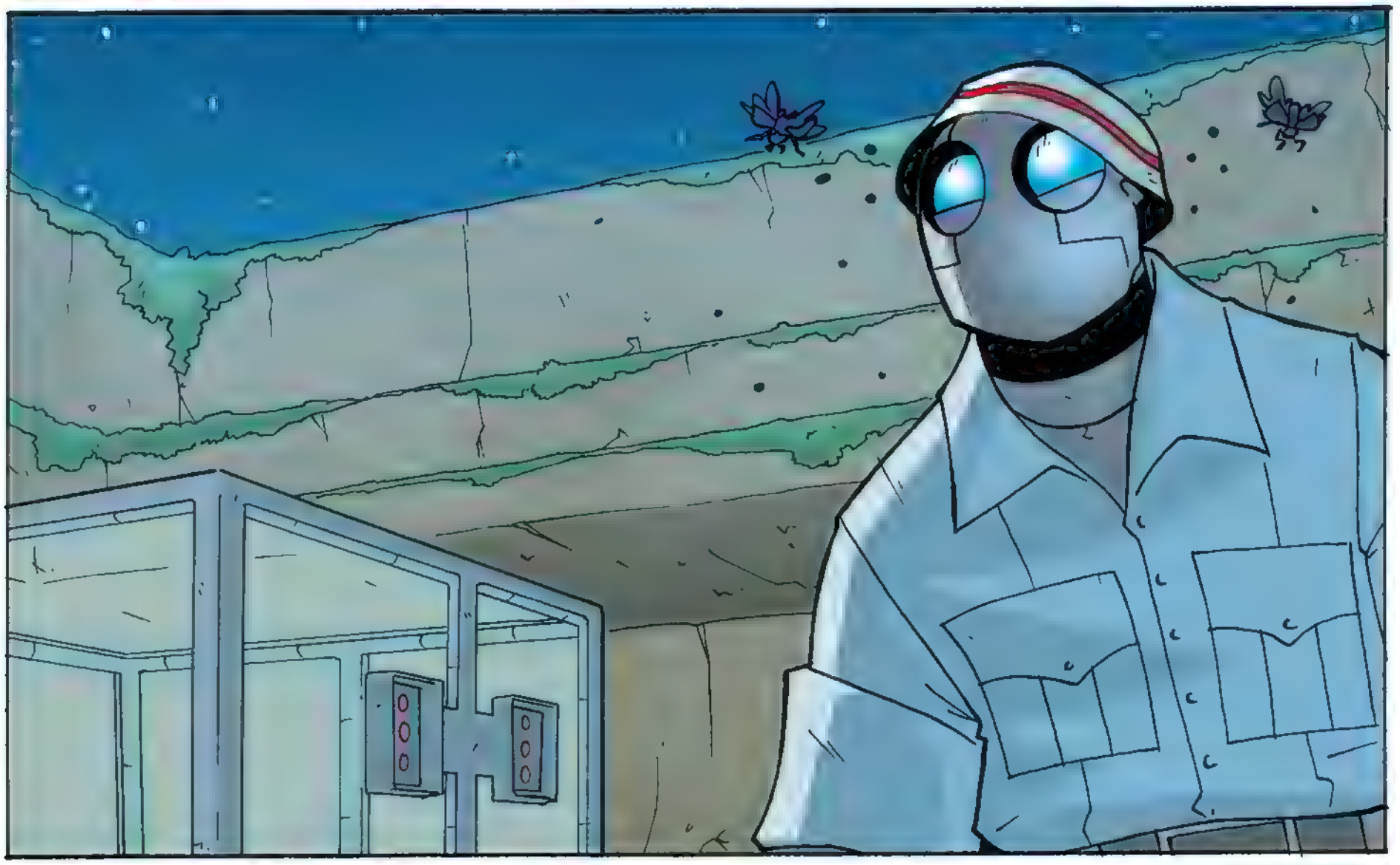
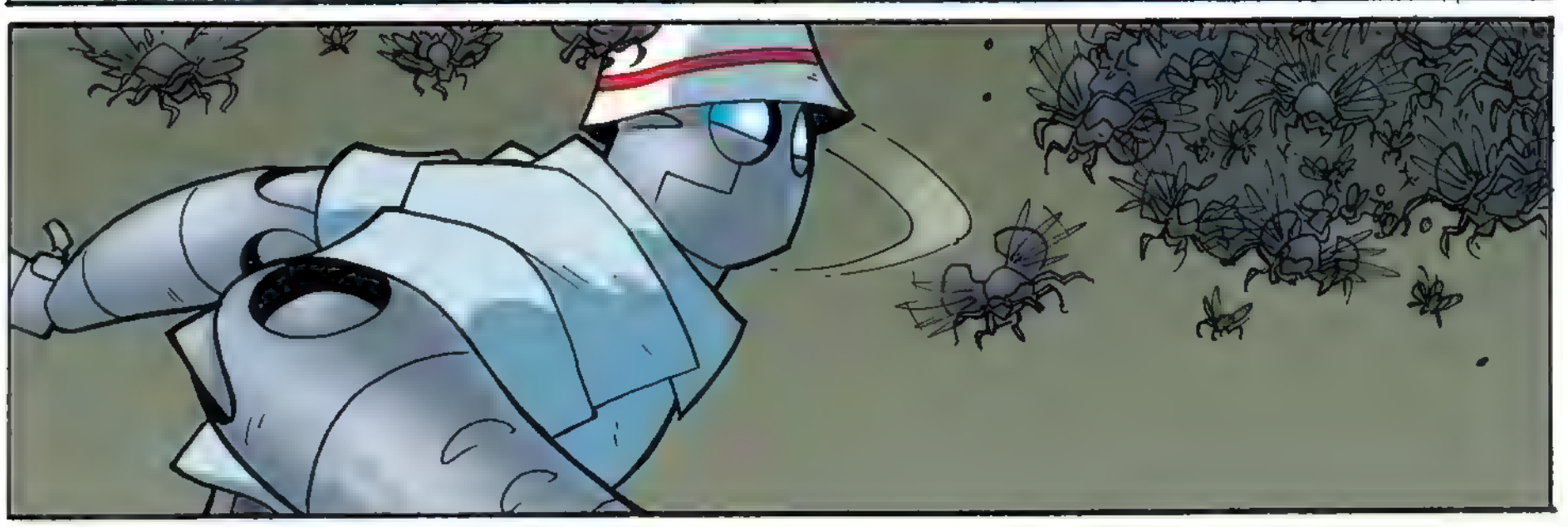




AAUUGGGHH!

ROBO, WHAT'S-- EMPTY?!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND. WHAT HAPPENED?

OH GOD, WHY!

AH, I SEE.

KROOM

THEY'RE TOUCHING ME, THEY'RE TOUCHING ME!

ZORTH AXIS INDEED. COLD, HARD *FACT* WILL SAVE THIS UNIVERSE.

DANGER

SCIENCE!

WE ARE *MADE* OF STARSTUFF. OUR CONSCIOUSNESS, OUR *INTELLIGENCE* IS THE MACHINERY OF THE COSMOS DISCOVERING ITSELF.

OUR *SCIENCE* WILL BE ITS CANDLE IN THE DARK.

OKAY, DON'T PANIC. THEY'RE NOT **ACTUAL** BUGS THAT CAN CRAWL INTO YOUR BODY AND DIE AND GET THEIR DISGUSTING BUG GUTS ALL OVER YOUR INTERNAL SYSTEMS AND MAKE YOUR BODY INCREDIBLY GROSS FOREVER. THEY'RE JUST HYPER-DIMENSIONALLY DIVIDED INTERSECTIONS OF A MONSTER OUTSIDE OF TIME AND SPACE. THAT'S **ALL.** YOU CAN FIGHT **THAT.** YOU **HAVE** FOUGHT THAT. IT'S **NOT BUGS.**

ROBO.

CARL?

I AM ***REPURPOSING*** THE EQUIPMENT. CAN YOU KEEP THE INSECT SWARM BUSY?

THEY'RE NOT INSECTS! DON'T ***SAY*** THEY'RE INSECTS!

WELL, NO, STRICTLY SPEAKING I SUPPOSE THEY AREN'T...

I GOT A ***THING*** ABOUT BUGS.

YES, I NOTICED THE ***SCREAMING.***

CAN YOU GIVE ME TEN MINUTES, ROBO?

MAKE IT A **FAST** TEN MINUTES.

SCHURRRD

"THE PLAN IS SIMPLE.

"IT IS A SINGLE ENTITY INTERSECTING OUR SPACE-TIME VIA ***THOUSANDS*** OF ITERATIONS.

"EUSOCIAL SPECIES SUCH AS ANTS OR BEES CAN ATTACK MUCH LARGER CREATURES DESPITE THEIR SMALL INDIVIDUAL SIZES BECAUSE OF THEIR GREAT NUMBERS.

THEY'RE NOT BUGS, THEY'RE NOT BUGS...

"THEREFORE, WE NEED ONLY ***NEGATE*** THOSE ADVANTAGES AND REDUCE THIS SWARM TO A SINGLE, VERY ***PUNCHABLE,*** ENTITY."

DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING?

I HAVEN'T A CLUE.

ONE FINAL ADJUSTMENT.

CARL!

WHEN YOU RETURN TO YOUR UNOBSERVABLE BUT EMPIRICALLY DETERMINED DIMENSION OF ORIGIN--

--TELL THEM CARL SAGAN SENT YOU.

AH-HA!

THE CRAWLING CHAOS

BRIAN CLEVINGER
WORDS

SCOTT WEGENER
ART

RONDA PATTISON
COLORS

JEFF POWELL
LETTERS

The Shadow From Beyond Time
Chapter 5
From Beyond
PROPERTY OF TESLADYNE
INSANITY
ENTROPY
OBLIVION
MADNESS
DOOM

TESLADYNE HQ
FEBRUARY 9, 2009

YES, SIR. IMMEDIATELY. I'LL HAVE A REPORT SENT TO...? AH, PERFECT.

OF COURSE. GIVE MY BEST TO MICHELLE AND THE KIDS.

ROBO?

CALL ENDED
WHITE HOUSE

MARTIN, COME IN. TODAY'S THE BIG DAY.

BOOM

LET'S SEE WHAT YOU GUYS HAVE BEEN BREWING DOWN IN EXOTIC PHYSICS.

I THINK YOU'LL BE PLEASED. LOUIS JUST FINISHED THE FINAL CHECKS.

FROM BEYOND

BRIAN CLEVINGER
WORDS

SCOTT WEGENER
ART

RONDA PATTISON
COLORS

JEFF POWELL
LETTERS

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

WE BUILT A QUANTUM DECOMPUTER.

WHY DOES IT LOOK LIKE *THIS?*

NOT LIKE THIS.

WHAT'D YOU *THINK* A QUANTUM DECOMPUTER WOULD LOOK LIKE?

I DON'T UNDERSTAND, WE SUBMITTED THE PLANS WITH OUR PROPOSAL. WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

YOU GUYS *REALLY* DON'T SEE ANYTHING WRONG WITH THIS THING?

IT'S A LITTLE LARGE.

I ALWAYS THOUGHT WE SHOULD'VE USED MORE ERBIUM IN THE CORE.

OH, IF IT WAS UP TO YOU, IT'D BE AN ***ERBIUM*** DECOMPUTER.

NO. LOOK AT THAT THING. IT'S EVIL. YOU BUILT AN EVIL COMPUTER.

ROBO, IT'S ESSENTIALLY A CALCULATOR. IT CAN'T BE "EVIL."

COMPUTERS THAT **SOLVE** PROBLEMS DON'T LOOK LIKE THIS. THEY'RE UNASSUMING BOXES ON A DESK. THEY'RE REFRIGERATORS WITHOUT THE EXCITING BRAND NAMES.

COMPUTERS THAT **ARE EVIL** HAVE ALL KINDS OF UNNECESSARY ORNAMENTATION. THIS THING'S **VENTING STEAM!** WHY'S IT DOING THAT? IT'S LIKE IN NATURE. LIKE RATTLESNAKES OR BRIGHTLY COLORED POISONOUS FROGS. IT **WANTS** YOU TO KNOW IT'S DANGEROUS.

WE'RE LITERALLY THE *PUSH* OF A *BUTTON* AWAY FROM RESOLVING THE SINGLE GREATEST CONFLICT OF MODERN PHYSICS. IT'S A PROBLEM THAT THWARTED *EINSTEIN.*

WE HAD TO THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX WHEN IT CAME TO BUILDING A MACHINE TO SOLVE IT. AND YOU WANT TO PULL THE PLUG BECAUSE OF, WHAT, *AESTHETICS?* WE'RE GOING TO MAKE *HISTORY.*

WHEN YOU TRY TO RESOLVE QUANTUM GRAVITY WITH SPECIAL RELATIVITY YOU'RE LEFT WITH AN *INFINITE* NUMBER OF SOLUTIONS. ALL THIS *PERFECTLY INNOCENT* MACHINE DOES IS TAKE THOSE SOLUTIONS AND "DE-COMPUTE" THEM DOWN TO A SINGLE STATEMENT.

WHICH *SHOULD* TAKE AN INFINITE AMOUNT OF TIME, RIGHT? *BUT,* SEE, ALL THOSE SOLUTIONS EXIST SIMULTANEOUSLY. LIKE, IT TAKES A LONG TIME TO *COUNT* TO A TRILLION, BUT YOU DON'T *HAVE* TO COUNT TO IT TO KNOW THAT IT'S THERE. YOU CAN SKIP STRAIGHT TO IT.

OUR MACHINE INCREASES PLANCK'S CONSTANT *WITHIN* THE CPU UNTIL IT *BECOMES* A WAVE OF EVERY POSSIBLE STATE *OF* THAT CPU, WHICH WE COLLAPSE INTO THE VERSION THAT HAPPENED TO SKIP STRAIGHT TO THE CORRECT SOLUTION.

AND THAT'S POSSIBLE?

IN THEORY. FOR A *BILLIONTH* OF A SECOND. AT A COST OF ABOUT THREE MILLION DOLLARS.

FSSSSHHHHHHH

THE COST OF RUNNING THIS PROCESS FOR ONE SECOND WOULD EXCEED THE ACCUMULATED WEALTH OF ALL HUMAN CIVILIZATION.

I REALLY NEED TO RESTRUCTURE MY LIFE SO I CAN SPEND MORE TIME READING ABSTRACTS AND LESS TIME PUNCHING DINOSAURS.

OKAY. WE'LL MOVE FORWARD WITH THE EXPERIMENT. BUT! WE SHUT IT DOWN THE SECOND SOMETHING EVIL HAPPENS.

WE'RE NOT REALLY EQUIPPED TO DETECT EVIL.

FURTHERMORE, I DOUBT YOU COULD QUANTIFY AN ETHICAL PRECEPT INTO EXPERIMENTAL DATA.

YOU GUYS ARE SIMULTANEOUSLY UNDER- AND OVER-THINKING THIS. LET'S JUST SAY WE'LL HIT THE KILL SWITCH WHEN THE SCREAMING STARTS.

FINE.

AGREED.

OKAY, ARE WE READY?

OH YEAH, I OUTLINED MY NOBEL ACCEPTANCE SPEECH LAST NIGHT. THERE'S A LOT OF EXPLETIVES.

YOU'RE AN ANGRY, ANGRY MAN.

HEY, WHAT I'M GOING TO SAY TO THOSE NOBEL SNOBS IS NOTHING THEY DON'T NEED TO HEAR.

CAN WE MOVE THIS ALONG?

SORRY, ROBO.

ALL SYSTEMS STILL GREEN. READY WHEN YOU ARE.

"CLICKITY-CLACK

THREE.

TWO.

ONE.

CHAK

UH, DID IT WORK?

INCONCLUSIVE. SYSTEM'S JUST SPITTING OUT RANDOM NUMBERS.

LOOK AT THAT ONE. "INFINITY MINUS ONE"?

WHAT'D YOU SAY?

IT'S MEANINGLESS NOISE, REALLY. WE MUST'VE--

AHHHHHH!

GUWAGT

NO. SIX MORE YEARS. THIS WASN'T SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN FOR SIX MORE YEARS!

AHH!

AUGH!

YOU HAD AN *APPOINTMENT* FOR THIS?!

IT'S MORE COMPLEX THAN THAT, BUT I THINK TOYING WITH A FUNDAMENTAL LAW OF THE UNIVERSE ALTERED ITS SCHEDULE.

WE'VE GOT TO LOCK THIS DOWN BEFORE IT GETS ANY--

=URK=

SKGLRT!

HEY!

DOOF!

BOHHHHHH

BOHHHHHHHHH

FRO-GO FUSION

ORCHID

KAT

FIN

ORCHID

WHAT'S *HAPPENING?!* WHAT HAPPENED TO *LOUIS?*

A HYPER-DIMENSIONAL CONSTRUCT IS TRYING TO DEVOUR THE UNIVERSE.

SPUHGT

WHAT?

I STOPPED IT BEFORE, BUT **TECHNICALLY** I HAVEN'T DONE THAT **YET.**

WHAT?

SGLUUG

OH, GOD! WE'RE GONNA DIE!

CALM DOWN. I'VE GOT A PLAN.

FIRST, **GOODBYE** LOUIS. SECOND, YOU STALL IT.

WHAT?!

THIRD, OPEN UP, UGLY.

ELSEWHEN

SPLASH

I SPENT THIRTY YEARS WONDERING WHY I DIDN'T GET OUT OF THE WAY. NOW I KNOW.

HOLY **SOCKS!** AN ALTERNATE UNIVERSE! OR IS ONE OF US A **TIME TRAVELER?**

NO SUCH THING AS TIME TRAVEL.

OKAY. WE'RE ALL HERE.

WE'RE ONLY EXPERIENCING **THIS** NONLINEAR EPISODE DUE TO INTERACTING WITH PHYSICS FROM OUTSIDE OUR UNIVERSE. **THAT** SHOULD TELL YOU SOMETHING ABOUT THE FEASIBILITY OF TIME TRAVEL.

HOW'S **HE** KNOW THAT?

BECAUSE HE REMEMBERS THIS HAPPENING. WE ALL DO, EXCEPT YOU, BECAUSE YOU'RE THE FIRST ONE TO GO THROUGH IT.

WHAT IF WE DO SOMETHING WE **DIDN'T** DO BEFORE?

IT'S NOT LIKE THAT. THIS IS ONLY HAPPENING **ONCE**, WE'RE JUST WITNESSING IT FROM DIFFERENT POINTS IN OUR LIFE.

BANANA OIL.

YEAH, THAT'S THE **THIRD** TIME I'VE HEARD YOU SAY THAT, NOT COUNTING THE TIME I WAS YOU WHEN I SAID IT, AND EVERY TIME I SAY THIS: **SHUT UP** AND LISTEN, THE **ADULTS** ARE TALKING.

OKAY. ALL THAT STANDS BETWEEN THIS *THING* AND THE END OF THE UNIVERSE IS *ME.* FRANKLY, I ALWAYS EXPECTED THIS DAY WOULD COME.

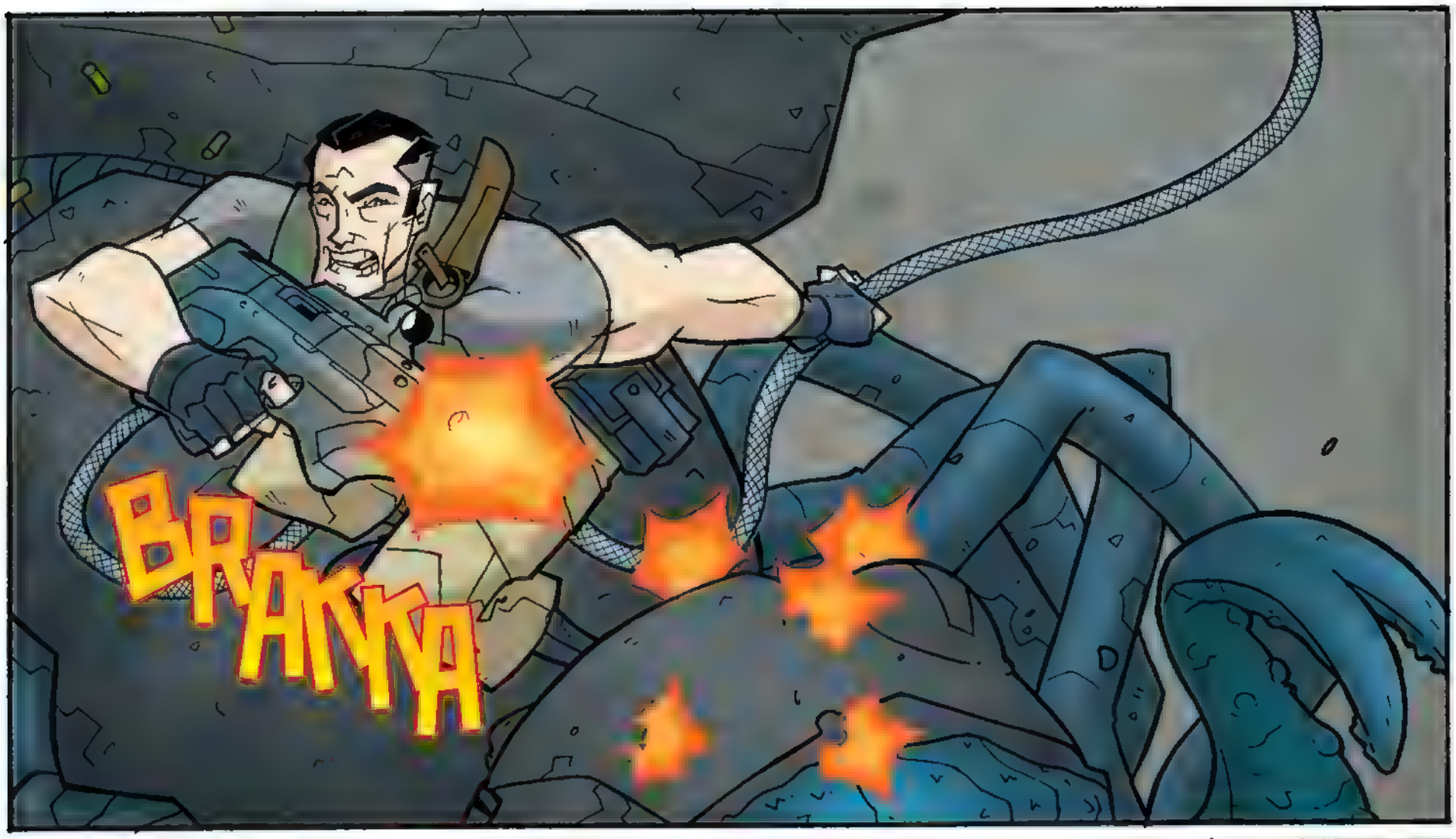
ALWAYS KNEW THERE WAS A GREATER PURPOSE TO MY LIFE--THE VAST *MACHINERY* OF REALITY GUIDING ME, *DRIVING* ME TOWARD SOME ULTIMATE MOMENT. *THIS* MOMENT.

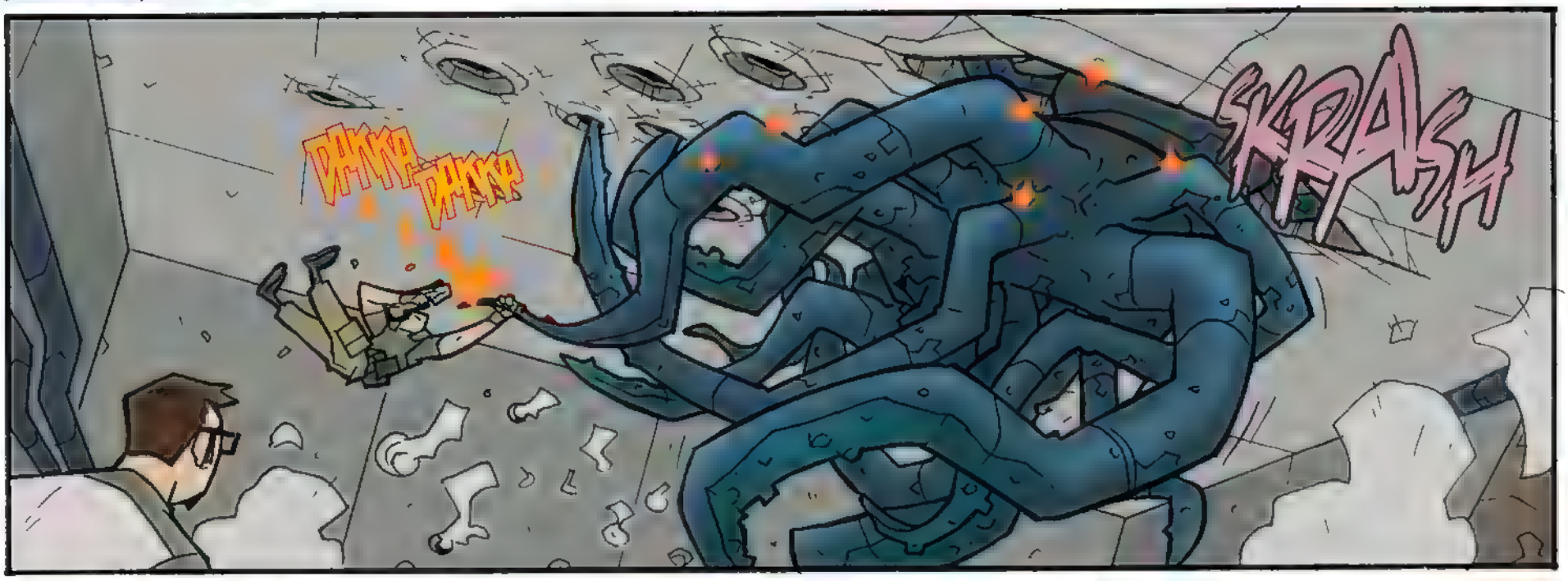
THE MOMENT I *SAVE EVERY-THING.*

SKROOOM

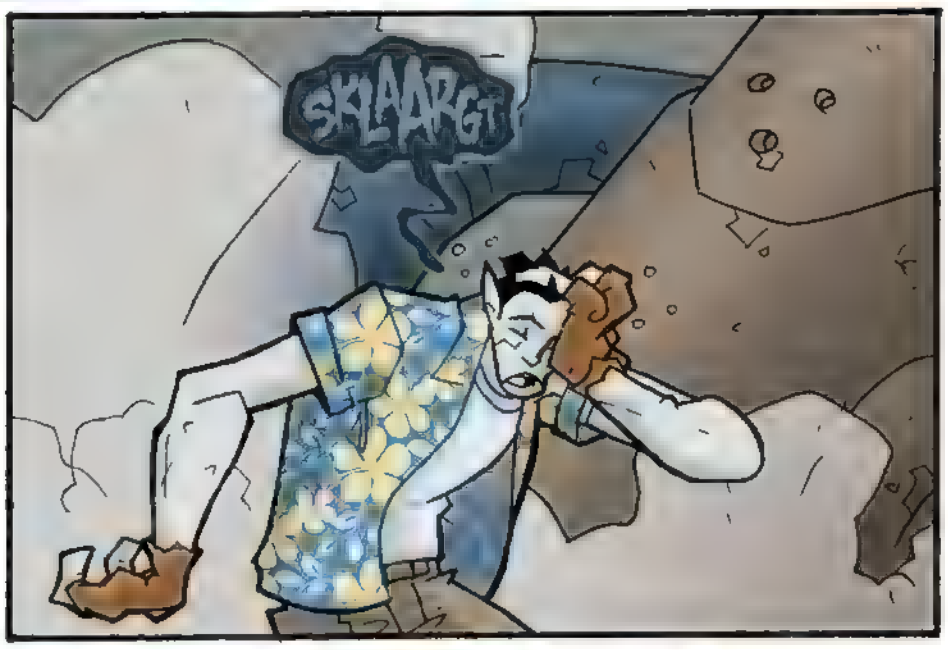
SGLUUR?

THWACK


BRAKKA


RAKKA-RAKKA
SKRASH

OR... NOT.


SKLAARGT

GET OUT OF MY FRIEND, YOU ALIEN FREAK BASTARD.

YOU'RE GOING TO LEARN THE **HELL** OUT OF HYPERDIMENSIONAL MATHEMATICS WHEN YOU GET BACK. FOCUS ON ELECTRODYNAMICS.

WHY?

SO WE'LL KNOW HOW TO CONVERT THESE BURNT OUT POWERPACKS INTO A HYPER-DIMENSIONAL BOMB TO BLOW UP THE MONSTER ACROSS MULTIPLE SIMULTANEOUS POINTS IN SPACE-TIME.

HOW'D YOU KNOW THEY BURNED OUT?

BECAUSE WE JUST **TOLD** YOU, SO YOU'LL **REMEMBER** THEY ARE, SO WE CAN **TELL** YOU THEY ARE. **DAH!** STUDY TEMPORAL MECHANICS WHILE YOU'RE AT IT. SHORT VERSION: WHEN YOUR FUTURE SELF TELLS YOU TO DO SOMETHING, **YOU DO IT.**

WHAT'S YOUR BEEF?

THINK ABOUT IT. THERE'S ONLY **FOUR** OF US. THAT MEANS WE'RE ABOUT TO KILL THE MONSTER FOREVER, **OR** IT'LL COME BACK IN THE FUTURE AND DESTROY EVERYTHING NO MATTER **WHAT** WE DO, **OR**--MY FAVORITE--IT'S **ALREADY** TAKEN ROOT IN MY TIME AND WE'LL CEASE TO EXIST WHEN WE RETURN TO REALITY.

LIKE HE SAID, **HYPER-DIMENSIONAL MATH.** YOU'LL HAVE TO INVENT SOME OF IT SO WE CAN DO WHAT WE'RE DOING RIGHT NOW.

THIS IS A **LOT** TO ABSORB.

WE KNOW.

GIVE ME THE--

HERE.

I THINK WE--

BWEEEEEE

GET CLEAR!

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

DOESN'T MATTER. IT'S GOING TO EXPLODE BEFORE WE CAN TELL YOU.

THUD

URUBAMBA VALLEY
PERU, 1971

ROBO!

PLOIT

AUGH!

AT LEAST THAT WASN'T AS BAD AS **LAST** TIME...

IS IT *GONE?*

I DON'T THINK WE'LL EVER KNOW.

OREGON, 1957

POIT

FWAM

OOF!

UGH!

WRAWG

AAAH!

ROBO, ARE WE ALIVE?

OH, GOD. I HAVE TO THAT TWO MORE TIMES, DON'T I...

NEW YORK CITY, 1926

KRAKOOM

WOOOOOOOSH

TOTAL PROTONIC REVERSAL...

FWAM

I SAY!

GOOD LORD, ROBO.

I MET THREE FUTURE VERSIONS OF MYSELF WHO TURNED THE LIGHTNING GUNS INTO A BOMB USING SCIENCE THEY TOLD ME TO INVENT.

AH, OF COURSE.

HORSEFEATHERS! WHAT DO YOU MEAN "OF COURSE"?

CAUSALITY IS ONLY AN ILLUSION OF LINEAR THINKING. NONLINEAR EVENTS HAPPEN ALL THE TIME.

WELL, I'M GLAD IT MAKES SENSE TO ONE OF--

WHERE'S HOWARD?

ER...

CHA-FOOM

TOOF

UWAARGHT!

THAT A FACT?

PIOP

ROBO.

JENKINS.

OKAY, SO...IS IT OVER?

DIE, YOU EVIL MONST-- LOUIS?!

YOU GUYS ARE FIRED.

?

END

Free Comic Book Day 2010
Flight of the Terror Birds

WHAT DO YOU MEAN *I* LOST HIM?

WELL, I SURE DIDN'T.

YOU LOST HIM AS MUCH AS I DID.

HE JUST ***DISAPPEARED.*** I'M NOT TAKING THE HEAT FOR THAT.

THREE MINUTES EARLIER

HRK!

MAYBE HE JUST WENT TO SCOUT AHEAD A LITTLE.

WITHOUT ***THIS?***

TESLADYNE HQ
20 HOURS EARLIER

TESLADYNE
VMM-266

WHOA! WE'RE LOOKING FOR GIANT EXTINCT RAINFOREST CHICKENS THAT MIGHT NOT BE EXTINCT. YOU'RE PACKING FOR AN *INVASION.*

*ALL OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION IS ONLY THE **BYPRODUCT** OF OUR ENDLESS WAR AGAINST THE INSECTS.*

*RAINFORESTS ARE ENEMY TERRITORY, BENJAMIN. WE WILL BE SURROUNDED. **ALONE.***

MARS DIVISION

*SO, EXCUSE **ME** WHILE I BRING THE BIGGEST ORDINANCE TO THE PARTY.*

VENTURA

I HEAR YA!

68mm LAW

ROBO, HAVE *YOU* EVER TAKEN THE TESLADYNE PSYCH EXAM?

MARS DIVISION

HE'D NEVER GO OUT THERE WITHOUT IT.

YEAH, WHAT WAS HE GOING TO *DO* WITH THAT ANYWAY? YOU CAN'T EXACTLY *SHOOT* MOSQUITOES.

EVEN HUGE RAINFORESTY ONES.

HE CAN'T HAVE GOTTEN FAR.

ROBO!

MEANWHILE, QUITE FAR...

MRF!

ROBO!

WHERE COULD HE *BE?*

BEN, C'MERE!

I THINK WE GOT SOME-THING.

FLIGHT OF THE TERROR BIRDS

WORDS
BRIAN CLEVINGER

STORY / ART
SCOTT WEGENER

COLORS
RONDA PATTISON

LETTERS
JEFF POWELL

WERK.

YOU GONNA PUT ME DOWN SOON, OR...?

KLUD

LOOK, JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE NEARLY EXTINCT DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN TREAT PEOPLE LIKE--

WARK!

YER NOT THE BOSS OF ME.

SQONK?

WHAT DO YOU--

OKAY, SO THERE'S A HOLE IN YOUR NEST. WHAT OF IT?

SKWAAARK!

HEY, LEGGO! WHAT'RE YOU--!

OH, THIS IS GOOD. THIS IS WHAT I NEED IN MY LIFE.

WERK.

THIS IS NOT THE LIFE I CHOSE. I'M **RELATIVELY** SURE EINSTEIN SPENT **ZERO** TIME AS PART OF A GIANT ANGRY CHICKEN'S **NEST.**

HEH. RELATIVELY.

AN HOUR LATER

THIS IS NOT A **STANDARD MODEL** OF BOHR'S DAILY LIFE!

THIS WOULD BE OUTSIDE THE **FIELD** OF MAXWELL'S EXPERIENCE!

SEVERAL HOURS LATER

UH. BLACK HOLES SUCK. JUST LIKE HAWKING. UM. HEISENBERG, SOMETHING, SOMETHING, UNCERTAIN.

SO MUCH LATER

UGH. IF THERE WAS A KIND AND MERCIFUL GOD, HE'D KILL ME **RIGHT NOW.**

ROBO, HANG TIGHT.

OR THAT'S GOOD TOO.

WE'RE GONNA GET YOU OUTTA HERE.

WAIT, YOU GOTTA GET THE BIRD FIRST.

LANG'S ON BIRD DUTY.

CAREFUL, OW, OW!

SQUIRNK?

OH. OH, I SEE.

WHAT? WHAT'S HAPPENING?

POOMPOOM

POOMPOOM

CAN'T TAKE YOU BOYS ANYWHERE.

HRRG!

WERK?

WONK!

THERE!

GRONNNK.

UH, GUYS? THAT SHOULD'VE KNOCKED OUT A *RHINO.*

FWAM

THIS'LL DO IT.

TEN SECONDS LATER

PUNCHING ONLY MAKES THEM ANGIER!

THESE ARE THE LEAST EXTINCT BIRDS I'VE EVER MET!

THEY'VE GOT A REAL ATTITUDE PROBLEM TOO!

SKWONK!

WERK.

WARK.

KEEP GOING, I'LL STALL THEM!

FWAM

WONK!

ROBO, HURRY! WE CAN'T RISK GETTING SEPARATED AGAIN.

OVER HERE!

ONE HOUR LATER

WELL, THANK GOD FOR OPPOSABLE THUMBS, BUT *NOW* WHAT?

NOW WE WAIT FOR OUR SATELLITE HOOK UP TO BE IN RANGE SO WE CAN CALL FOR HELP.

WONK

WERK

SQUERNK

GUWONK

WARK

HOW LONG'LL THAT TAKE?

ABOUT SIX HOURS.

MAYBE THEY'LL GET TIRED AND GO AWAY?

WONK
WERK
SQUERNK WARK
GUWONK

MAN. I GOTTA *GO.*

END